

DD

405.12

1789

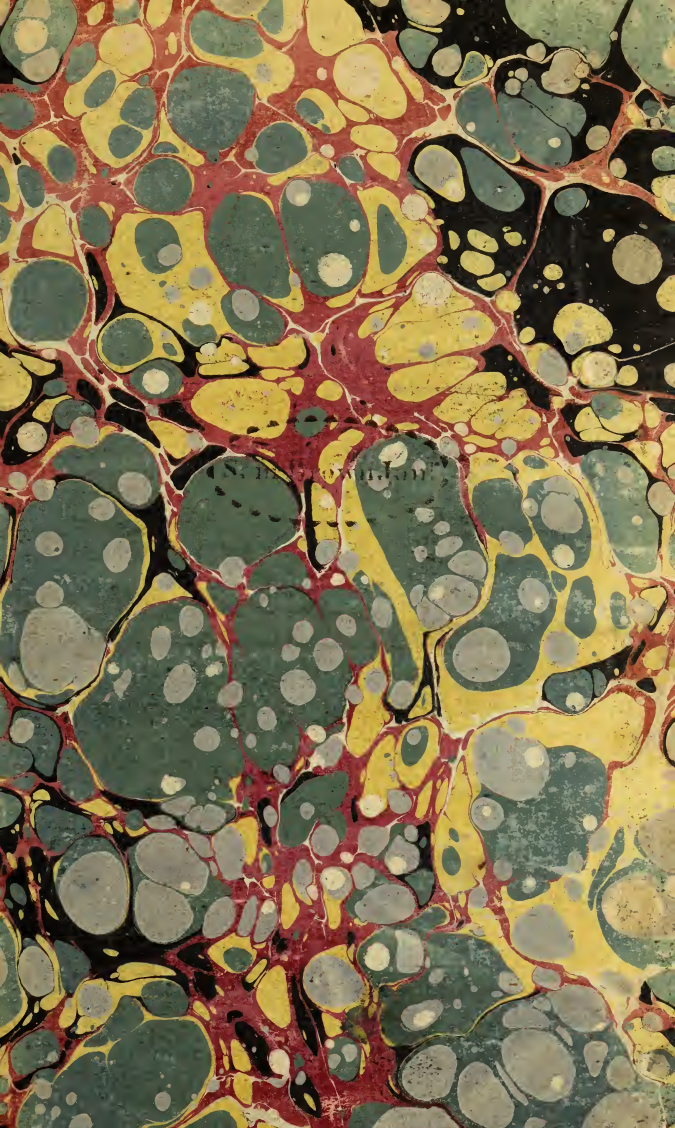
LIBRARY
OF
TUFTS COLLEGE.
THE GIFT OF

Thomas C. Bacon, Esq.,

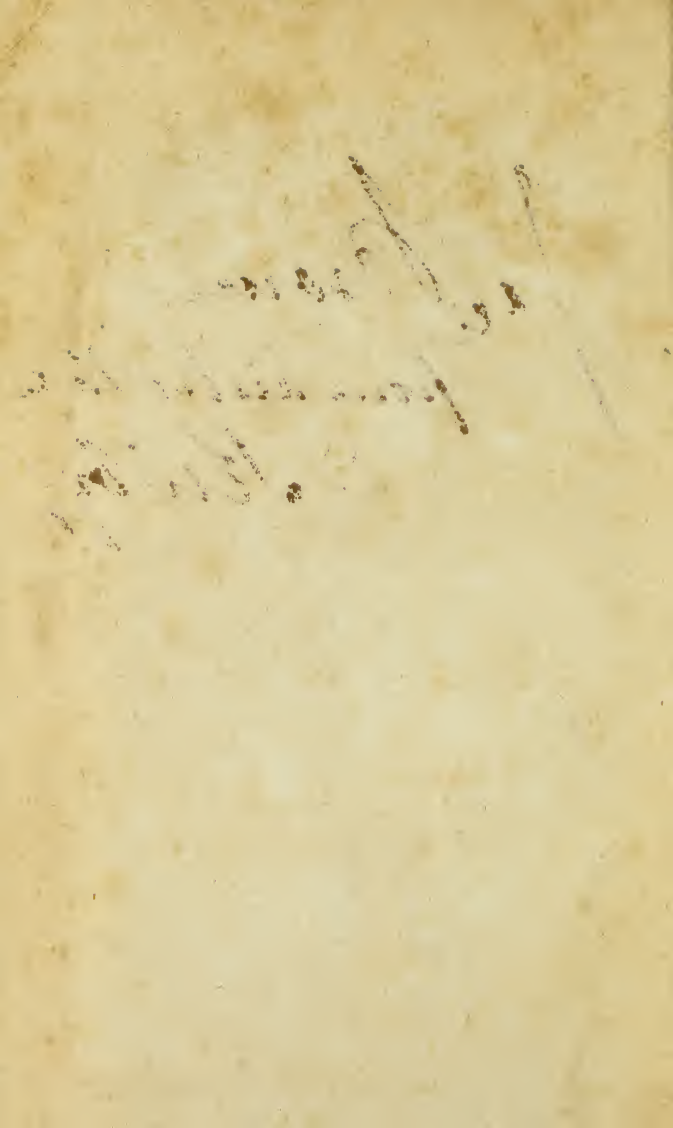
Boston.

(10962.)

Jan. 5, 1867.



For Brown
from his brother
E. Kirby



POSTHUMOUS WORKS
OF
F R E D E R I C II.
K I N G O F P R U S S I A


VOL. XI.

10962

DD
405.12
1789

Ms. Gen. Brown.
CORRESPONDENCE.

L E T T E R S
BETWEEN
F R E D E R I C II.
AND
M. D' A L E M B E R T.



TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH
BY
THOMAS HOLCROFT.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR
G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

M.DCC.LXXXIX.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

L E T T E R S

BETWEEN

FREDERIC II. AND M. D'ALEMBERT.

L E T T E R I.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, March 11, 1760.

I HAVE too good an opinion of my country to imagine it will attribute gratitude to me as a crime; but, be the misfortunes which I neither can foresee nor fear what they may, I shall cede to a desire which I find too strong to be resisted. I therefore most humbly and most respectfully intreat your majesty to accept my thanks, for the charming epistle with which you have honoured me. I am so much flattered in it, sire, and have so much reason to be vain of

it, that my praises ought to be suspected. My vanity however apart, it does not appear to me possible to express truths which are important to mankind with more dignity and force; truths too which unfortunately are not sufficiently known, to those who ought to be their most powerful defenders.

Present circumstances, and my respect for the time of your majesty, will not permit me to say more. May we, sire, for the peace of mankind and the good of philosophy, which is in so much need of you, soon enjoy this so much-desired peace! It will procure me the only happiness I wish; that of going and laying my profound veneration, and inviolable attachment, at the feet of your majesty. This prose, sire, is unequal to the poetry of your majesty; but the sentiments it expresses are, like itself, simple and true.

I am with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R II.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, December 22, 1760.

I HAVE, as I ought, paid every respect to the great and glorious occupations of your majesty,

majesty, during this campaign; and it was from this motive that I have thought it my duty not to importune you, even with my gratitude. Your majesty has new claims over me by the beautiful porcelain ink-stand, which you have been so kind as to send me. I received it on the 15th of August, a day which the Austrian generals, in despite of the benediction bestowed on their swords, will remember as long as I shall. The most worthy use I could make of such a present would be to write the history of your majesty; but this is a work reserved for a pen more eloquent than mine.

May I soon see the moment I so much wish for, in which I may lay at your majesty's feet my admiration, my eternal gratitude, and the inviolable attachment with which I shall all my life remain, &c.

L E T T E R III.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, December 23, 1762.

IN conformity to the law which I have continually imposed upon myself, I have respected the necessary occupations of your ma-

jeſty, during the campaign, which were of themſelves ſo ſplendid that I ſhould have been ſcrupulous of diſturbſng them, however much in haſte I might have been, at all events, to have drawn upon myſelf thoſe pleaſant darts, with which your majeſty ſo pityleſſly wounds me, in the charming epiſtle which you have done me the honour to addreſs to me. At preſent, ſire, now marſhal Daun has ended his glorious enterpriſes, I, unworthy as I am, muſt be his ſucceſſor; for it is the deſtiny of your majeſty to be always at war; in ſummer with the Auſtrians, in winter with mathematics. But, ſire, ſince the haughty and formidable houſe of Auſtria modeſtly acknowledges itſelf beaten, there will be no difficulty with humble geometry. It cannot do better than imitate Meſſieurs Bamberg and Wurzburg; that is to ſay, to pay and be ſilent.

I have ſcarcely any longer a hope of ſeeing your majeſty; I know not when this fearful and deſtructive war will end. I only know, and all Europe knows the ſame, that it does not depend on your majeſty to permit ſuffering humanity to reſpire, after ſo many miſeries; but ſince your enemies are not yet weary of exterminating ſuch multitudes of men by ſword and hunger, I may at leaſt be indulged, now that
the

the house of Austria is no longer our ally, in giving a free vent to my wishes; which are that your majesty may obtain all that success and fame which your great soul, courage, talents and labours so well merit; and, more especially, may your tranquillity and that of your people soon be secured by a durable and glorious peace; even though, to the great scandal of geometry, the treaty should be written in verse!

I am with profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R IV.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, March 7, 1763.

I AM at length permitted to take breath after all the torments of inquietude, and to give free utterance to sentiments which have so long been imprisoned in my heart. I may be allowed to congratulate your majesty, on your success and glory, without fear of offending any one, and without present trouble or future terror. Why could you not read the emotions of my mind for these six years past; the joy which

your victories have given me, that of Rosbach excepted, at which your majesty would have forbidden me to rejoice; and the still greater interest I have taken in your misfortunes; an interest that was the more lively because I felt these misfortunes might some time fall heavy on my country, and I pitied France without daring so to say. I know not whether we shall treat the Austrians as we have treated the Jesuits. The first have done us at least as much ill as the second; nor can we say, like the Christians, that *the new alliance (covenant) is superior to the old.*

But my country at length recovers breath. Your majesty is in tranquillity and in full possession of fame; and, for my own part, I wish ill to no one. May you, sire, long enjoy the peace and renown you have so justly acquired! May you long show yourself the example of Europe; a king equally admirable in war and peace; great in prosperity, great in adversity, and superior to praise and calumny!

With what eagerness, sire, should I not repair to express that which my pen so feebly traces, but which my heart so intimately feels! How great would be my satisfaction to lay my admiration, gratitude, profound respect, and inviolable attachment at your feet! But I am very sensible that the first moments of your
majesty's

majesty's repose must be wholly dedicated to the drying up those tears which you saw flow in your own despite; a much more worthy work than that of discoursing on philosophy and literature. I shall therefore wait your leisure, and your commands, to come and pass some time in your court. There, and by your conversation, shall I acquire that information which is necessary to extend those branches of philosophy in which you have the goodness to interest yourself. It is a labour which requires encouragement, and which philosophy can only find in you; for she is not so fortunate as your majesty, she has not made peace with all her foes. Do not imagine, sire, she so ill understands her own interests as to wish to be at war with you! What would become of her were she to lose such a support?

Geometry will follow her example; she will sign a peace like the Austrians, and even with more pleasure than they have done. She will be careful not to attempt to deprive your majesty of your *hobby-horse*, notwithstanding the kicks he has given her. She knows too well that nothing can be taken from you without consequent repentance, and being forced to restore what had been so taken. She will travel to receive instruction from you, and to convey

to your majesty, without dreading the reproach of flattery, the good wishes, love, and respect of all those who cultivate letters, and who have the felicity to behold, in the hero of Europe, their chief and their example.

I am with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R V.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, April 29, 1763.

I SHALL hasten with eagerness to Wesel, on the first information which your majesty shall send me of your journey; and I previously congratulate myself that I shall be able, at length, freely to lay at your feet those sentiments which I feel, in common with all Europe. I know not whether there are, as your majesty insinuates, kings at whom philosophers mock. Philosophy, sire, respects where she ought, esteems where she can, and goes no further; but, though she should occasionally extend her freedom, and sometimes dare to laugh, in private, at the expence of those masters of the earth, the philosopher Moliere would inform your majesty that

kings

kings resemble each other no more than *logs* ; * and I should add, with more respect and equal truth, philosophy would appear to me very *unphilosophic*, were she foolish enough to ridicule a king like you.

All the morality of Socrates has not done a hundredth part of the good to mankind your majesty has already accomplished, in six weeks peace. France, astonished at having been your foe, speaks of your renown with admiration, and of your benevolence with sensibility. Fear not, sire, notwithstanding all your wit on the follies of the poets, that the philosophic poet, who has lately concluded the treaty of Hubertsburg, will by posterity be ranked with the cardinal poet, who made the treaty of Versailles. It was natural enough that this latter treaty should make geometry a little out of temper with poetry ; you, sire, are in every respect the proper person to reconcile them. Permit me however to confess that, if hereafter geometry should allow poetry to borrow the aid of fable, it will not be when she shall have to speak of you.

I am with the most profound respect, &c.

* Qu'il y a rois et rois, comme *fagots et fagots*.

L E T T E R VI.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, September, 17, 1764.

THE philosophic work which I have had the good fortune to write, by command of your majesty, has procured me a letter on your part* much superior to the work itself, abounding in philosophy which fills me with admiration, and with goodness which penetrates me with gratitude. What a letter! And how worthy of the hero and the sage by whom it was written! If we except that it is too flattering to me, it would merit to be signed by as many philosophic names as the archdukes of Austria have christian names. But the name of your majesty is itself equivalent to all that the Lyceum and the Portico can afford, and much superior to the whole congregation of the calendar.

I congratulate myself, sire, to find that I think like you, on the vanity and futility of metaphysics. The true philosopher, it seems to me,

* This passage and others prove that there were letters written by the king to M. D'Alembert which are not here inserted. These consequently are either lost, mislaid, or suppressed. T.

ought to write on that science for no other purpose but to undeceive us concerning what it has taught, and especially on those grand questions which, as your majesty very well says, are probably of so little importance, for the very reason that they give us so much useless inquietude.

It is not the same with geometry, which is much more certain, because its object relates more to the senses.* It is a kind of rattle, which Nature has thrown out to amuse us in darkness. The questions which your majesty has the goodness to put to me, on the employment of analysis and metaphysics, in that science, require time to be answered with the precision requisite. I have already put a few reflections on paper, which I shall do myself the honour to send as soon as possible, if they do not appear to me to be unworthy of being presented to you.

Pythagoras, to whom you have done me the honour, fire, unworthy as I am, to compare me, with whom I have nothing in common, except that I dare not eat beans, and in reality for better reasons than his were; Pythagoras I say would have trembled, were Numa, Alexander and Marcus Aurelius to have been the judges of his writings. Your majesty pretends my rhapsodies will outlive the immortal journals of your cam-

* *L'objet en est plus terre à terre*—More earthly.

paigns. I have read, I know not where, that Cæsar prophesied the same, to a philosopher of his time, of whom we have no remains; whereas the commentaries of Cæsar, held in respect for a succession of eighteen centuries, are still read with admiration.

I acknowledge with regret, fire, it is astonishing that philosophers, condemned or persecuted in their own country, should not seek an asylum at the court of a king formed for their consolation, their protection and instruction! Your majesty asks the reason of this. It is because, in the country these philosophers inhabit, the climate consoles them for the injuries done them by the Sorbonne, and physical good is a remuneration for moral evil: it is because these philosophers have ill health, and friends that are dear to them: it is because they regard their country as the wife in the Mock Doctor does her husband, who loves him though he beat her, and who answers those who wish to separate them, fillily enough—"It is my pleasure that he should beat me."

You carry your goodness toward me, fire, to the utmost height, by your minute inquiries concerning my health. I find I recover gradually, and that I shall preserve it by severe regimen, the only remedy in which I confide. All
the

the prescriptions I have hitherto tried, though reputed *stomachics*, or *stomachals*, for their name among us is as unsettled as their effects, have done me more harm than good. My stomach is like pedants; it revolts at every thing novel; whether in physic or food. Should I however be so unfortunate as to be obliged to take remedies, I will make trial of the mineral waters which your majesty advises; but I will delay having recourse to medicine as long as possible. I think the doctor and the metaphysician are, from their incertitude, twin brothers, and seem to me to have great obligations to the divine, for not being the most absurd of human beings.

Will your majesty permit me to profit by the occasion, and present my very sincere good wishes, in behalf of the approaching marriage of the prince of Prussia.

*D'une tige en heros feconde,
Puisse naître, a jamais, des fils & des neveux,
Qui fasse le bonheur du monde ! **

These descendants, sire, will not have far to seek for the examples they ought to follow.

If your majesty, who will not have a gospel-minister for his professor of belles lettres, should

* From a stock in heros fruitful may continual successors be derived, who shall render mankind happy !

have

have less repugnance for a priest, I have been spoken to concerning a very honest fellow, who will only say mass (supposing he ever should say it) for his pleasure, and who will take it exceedingly well though your majesty should not come to hear him. In other respects, I hear all possible good of his capacity, character, and manners. Should it be agreeable to your majesty, I will propose the place to him, with the considerable advantages which are annexed to it, and will neglect nothing to induce his acceptance; happy if my success should correspond to my zeal.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R VII.

From M. D'Alembert:

S I R E,

Paris, November, 3d, 1764.

Being the anniversary of the battle of Torgau.

I HAVE read the work of which your majesty did me the honour to ask my opinion, with all the attention of which I am capable, and discovered in it that justness of understanding, and knowledge, which characterise your writings,

writings, and conversation. It nevertheless seems to me that your majesty might in some degree qualify the superiority you have given to Bayle and Gassendi, over Descartes and Leibnitz. I think, like you, that sufficient justice is not done to Gassendi, who was a most enlightened man, highly learned and sage: yet I do not believe that either he or Bayle ought to be preferred, without restriction, to Descartes and Leibnitz; for neither Gassendi nor Bayle can be said to have made any of those discoveries in science which characterise the man of genius; whereas Descartes invented the application of Algebra to geometry, and Leibnitz fluxions. Your majesty no doubt means to say that those two great men did not reason so clearly as Bayle and Gassendi, regarding them merely as metaphysicians; in which I am entirely of your opinion. The first were creative minds, the two latter *excelling*;* but it does not seem easy to me to adjust the rank between the two species of mind; and I beside fear your majesty should again draw upon yourself the arms of France and Germany, should you seem too much to lower the two philosophic heroes of those nations.

With respect to Mallebranche, I give him up to your majesty. I think him very inferior, in

* Des esprits *excellens*.

every view, as a philosopher, to Bayle and Gassendi. He even appears to me to be less a great philosopher than an excellent writer in philosophy. He has clearly discriminated the usual errors of the senses, and the imagination; but he has substituted other errors. I never could find in him any thing more than a good puller down, but a bad builder.

I also give up the lawyers to your majesty, the preachers, and all who resemble them. The babbling of the bar appears to me insupportable, and the declamation of the pulpit highly ridiculous.

Your majesty will soon be wearied with another kind of babbling; with the explanations which you have asked from me, and which I hope very soon to have the honour to send. I have exerted my utmost abilities to comply with your wishes; should you not understand me, it will not be your fault, but mine, or the fault of the subject.

This is not the first time that the world has heard of the satellite of Venus, which your majesty has thought proper to mention, of which the academy of Berlin certainly cannot be ignorant. As early as the year 1645, a Neapolitan mathematician, named Fontana, pretended to have observed this satellite four times. Cassini affirms

affirms he also saw it in 1672, and in 1686. Mr. Short, one of the Royal Society of London, pretends he enjoyed the same pleasure in 1740; and several French astronomers believed they perceived it three years ago; though others at the same time affirmed they did not. Your majesty therefore was unacquainted with this discovery, or this vision, because you were engaged with other satellites, and with some other Venus.

You wish me too much honour, when you desire to call this new planet after my name. I am not great enough to be the satellite of Venus, in the heavens; nor healthful enough to be one on earth; and I am too well satisfied with the little space I hold, in this world, to be ambitious of a place in the firmament. Should some satellite of Mars be hereafter discovered, I perfectly know the name I should give it; that name would be the best of your majesty's generals. With respect to Mercury, should he ever obtain the honour of a satellite, more than one defaulter, or one courtier, would furnish us with a name: but this god has too many satellites, on earth, to care about satellites in the sky.

That abominable priest, of whom I had heard so much good, is better pleased to remain, in I know not what village, than to go and teach eloquence to heretics. The abbé d'Olivet has

promised me to do every thing which depended on him to supply his place by another, and thus to accomplish the desires of your majesty. He wishes to find an excellent master, worthy of the important place your majesty means to bestow. Were a professor of inferior abilities sufficient, we should not be embarrassed in our choice; but it is your majesty's will not to be deceived, and you certainly merit obedience.

I take the liberty, sire, to add to this letter the writing you did me the honour to send me. I have made some slight corrections, which I also take the liberty to propose; the whole of which consist of the addition of half a line, some words substituted to others, and a few erasures; which, if I am not mistaken, will render the work more compact, without depriving it of strength. In other respects, I have generally preserved the thoughts and expressions. Perhaps my alterations have been made with a too sacrilegious hand.

Your majesty compares me to the kings of Persia, who endeavoured to inspire awe by concealing themselves from the sight of men. I cannot answer the obliging things you say on this subject; but I can assure you, with that sincerity which you know I possess, that, did princes resemble a king whom I have had the
happiness

happiness to see and approach, philosophy would little understand her own interest, were she to hide herself.

I am with all the admiration, gratitude, profound respect, and inviolable attachment, which will only end with life, &c.

L E T T E R VIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, March 1st, 1765.

M. HELVETIUS intends immediately to depart, to lay his admiration and profound respect at your majesty's feet. This is a homage which all philosophers owe, and which a philosopher like him is well worthy of rendering to a monarch like you. I dare hope that your majesty, in a personal acquaintance with him, will increase that advantageous idea of him which you have already conceived of his talents and virtues. His reception will console him for the persecutions which fanatics have excited against him; who, collectively, perform fewer good actions, in their whole life, than he performs in

a single day; and who find it a shorter and easier method to burn than to answer his book.

I am not, fire, obliged to say of M. Helvetius as Ovid did to his elegies—"Depart without me, I do not envy you,"—for I really envy him the honour he is preparing to enjoy; and the more for having enjoyed it myself. But my health, which has long been feeble and is not yet confirmed, will not permit me to take such a journey, and I complain of it with more reason than Louis XIV. in Boileau's epistle complains of his grandeur, which prevented him from passing the Rhine, in face of his enemy. This species of abstinence is the most vexatious regimen to which I have ever been condemned. I am in a kind of purgatory; but purgatory, say the doctors of the Sorbonne, cannot be eternal, and mine must have an end.

I am assured that your majesty is in good health, that you perform admirable things, and that you have received my new work, with which you appeared satisfied. This is my sole consolation. After the happiness of seeing your majesty, that which I most desire is to be able to merit your suffrage and esteem.

I am only acquainted with one work by M. Lambert, which is good, but does not appear to me comparable to any of the works of Euler;
and,

and, if the latter be on his knees before M. Lambert, as your majesty has done me the honour to inform me he is, we must say of M. Euler as has been said of La Fontaine, that he was silly enough to believe *Æsop* and *Phædrus* had more wit than himself. Not that I mean to derogate from the merit of M. Lambert, which must be very substantial, since it is so adjudged to be by the whole academy : but there is more than one honourable niche in the temple of the sciences ; according as there is, if we believe the gospel, several mansions in the house of the celestial father. M. Lambert perhaps is exceedingly worthy of filling one of those niches. I am besides informed he has written several excellent works, which I have never read. I should think him tolerably well provided for when he should be, to speak mathematically, in the same ratio to Euler as Descartes and Newton are to Bayle, according to your majesty ; or as Bayle is to Descartes and Newton, according to a mathematician of your acquaintance ; or, again, to use a comparison which is not subject to contradiction, in the same proportion as Marcus Aurelius and Gustavus Adolphus are to a monarch whom I dare not name.

I take the liberty once more to commend M. Thiebault, the grammar professor, to your ma-

jeſty's goodneſs, whom I had the honour to recommend to you, and who by this ſhould have received your commands. You will certainly have every reaſon to be ſatiſfied with him. I wiſh the ſame could be ſaid of the work which you are ſoon to receive, and in which I have endeavoured to ſpeak the truth, which was not exceedingly eaſy to be ſpoken. It is a philoſophical hiſtory of the diſaſter which the venerable ſociety of the Jeſuits has lately ſuffered, in France.

I ſhould have written the hiſtory of your majeſty with much more ſatiſfaction and ardour. Your victories, your laws, and your works, form an object much more worthy of poſterity than the migration of a horde of fanatics, whom other fanatics have expelled. But this work, ſir, ought not to be undertaken by any hand except your own. It is for the gods only to ſpeak in proper language of themſelves.

I am with the moſt profound reſpect and with ſentiments ſtill more dear to my heart, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R IX.

From the King.

Potsdam, March 24, 1765.

I AM three letters in your debt, my dear D'Alembert. The labours of my vocation, the hæmorrhoids, and gouty humours, have prevented me from answering you sooner.

I begin by thanking you for your work on the sublime sciences, which I think admirable; for you have deigned to descend from the ethereal regions, and lower yourself to the conception of the ignorant. I call your manuscript my asses guide, and I am a foot taller, now I understand some part of the mysteries which you adepts conceal from the multitude. I am exceedingly obliged to you for your grammarian. I think I discover him to be a clever fellow, and one who is deserving of something better than his present employ; something which may give him an opportunity of displaying his abilities. I send you at the same time the rules of my academy; as it is a new plan, I intreat you would give me your opinion of it frankly.

We expect Helvetius here. According to

his book, the first day of our acquaintance will be the best. But it is said he is infinitely superior to his book ; which, though written with great genius, has neither persuaded nor convinced me.

I previously thank you for your history of the Jesuits. The pope has issued a new bull, by which he confirms their institution, and I immediately forbade its admission into my states. Oh ! how would Calvin bless me could he but be informed of this anecdote ! But it did not originate in my love for Calvin ; it was that I might not further authorise a pernicious species of vermin in the country ; a race which soon or late must undergo the fate they have already undergone, in France and Portugal.

I at present live in the utmost tranquillity, and amuse myself with correcting verses which I wrote in more troublesome times : but to measure syllables and gingle rhimes is a very futile operation, compared to that of certain men of great genius, who measure the vast extent of space.—What is to be done ? I must say to you as Fontenelle has said ; each age has its bauble. I am old and infirm, and my poetry gives me pleasure. Philosophy informs me there are so many disagreeable things in this world, and so few the reverse, that pleasure ought to be seized
wherever

wherever it can be found. The great point is to be happy, even though it were at a puppet-show; but happiness and indigestion seldom inhabit the same house.

I sincerely compassionate the sufferings and languor you endure, at a time of life when you ought to enjoy all your strength. I suspect there is some obstruction in the viscera, and I opine in favour of mineral waters, and aperitives. The stomach, like philosophers, is often accused of the errors of others. You must examine your urine, and feel under the ribs, that you may be certain the liver is not affected. Your physicians ought to observe whether the gall and the bile perform their duty, and promote digestion: they should learn from symptoms, whether the mesentery be sound, or whether the blood be not too thick; for these are all necessary circumstances, in order to know the proper method of treatment. In any case fail not to take exercise, otherwise your disease will but increase. Recollect that you are the only person at this time who support the glory of your country; and, ungrateful though she be, since you love her, take care of yourself for her sake.

Would you believe that I have received a letter from Voltaire? I answered him very obligingly. He declaims against his *Dictionnaire*

naire Philosophique, which is printed in Holland. But we know what we know. A propos; it is said you have a monster in the Gevaudan. You will find it is the marquis, with his roquelaure, who has been mistaken for a monster. The tale says that he devours children, is very nimble, and leaps from branch to branch. This does not resemble the marquis. Had the monster slept it could have been only him.

We have a prince from Courland here, who has passed twenty years in Siberia. What he relates does not inspire any one with a wish to go thither, and I do not think you calculated ill, when you refused to approach its neighbourhood. I hope I shall soon hear better news of your health; it is a subject on which no person more interests himself than I do.

I pray God to take, &c.

L E T T E R X.

From the King.

August 20, 1765.

I WAS exceedingly vexed to hear of the mortification you have lately met with, and the injustice done you, by depriving you of a pension
which

which reverted to you by right. I flatter myself you will feel this affront so sensibly that you will not expose yourself to future insult. We soldiers, being struck on one cheek, do not turn the other. What is called honour in the world is no doubt a prejudice; but it is an established one, according to which the actions of men are judged. I should say much more, if I thought I could convince; but all my reasons come too late, for I remark that you have decidedly chosen your party. Do not imagine, however, that your reasons appear to me as satisfactory as they do to the small circle of friends, by whom you are surrounded, at Paris. I love to wrangle with mathematicians, that I may know whether, without understanding $xx + y$, it is not possible to be in the right.

Thus then shall I answer you, supposing this scene had passed in conversation——Climates have long been considered as nearly the same, those under the line and at the poles excepted. The nations who live in the temperate zone only experience some small difference, in the warmth of the air. There are indeed some places remarkable for unhealthy air, such as Mantua, Ostend in Flanders, and the town of Pest in Hungary. But the air of Berlin certainly has never been reputed unhealthy. It is
even

even so favourable to the French that several French refugees have died at the age of ninety, and upward. Hence, I conclude, the climate may be urged as a polite excuse, but not as a reason.

Your second argument has something more plausible in it : the order of nature requires I should die before you ; nor can I warrant the contrary. But who can have told you I cannot secure your fortune beyond the power and caprice of posterity ? The thing is very possible.

Such is my refutation. I hold myself to be victorious, and erect a trophy to myself, for having vanquished a great mathematician, wholly to his disgrace, I not having the gift of persuasion.

But let us talk on other subjects. You ask my opinion of the history of the Jesuits, and I own I think there is something more to be desired. I expected to have seen a history of the establishment of that order, and especially the rules of their institution ; to have traced its progress in the world ; the policy which prevailed in its foundation and extinction ; the most celebrated names it has produced ; how the doctrine of regicide first originated in it ; the sacred murders its disciples have committed ; their quarrels with the Jansenists ; their conduct

in Portugal; and, in fine, whatever promoted their banishment out of France.

Your plan is very different. You are equally inimical to Jesuits and Jansenists, who have exclaimed and have thought it their duty to interest the throne in their quarrel. The ministry may have taken offence, because you have discovered their secret views; for the duke de Choiseul, having been daring enough to attack and expel the Jesuits, will not want the courage, should opportunity offer, to effect the destruction of other *cuculati**. But this perhaps he would conceal, and not advertise the tonsured militia of the extent of his views. Such are my thoughts on the subject.

I bathe four hours a day, and therefore well may reason in the clouds, respecting the views of your ministers, which I neither do nor wish to understand. I am at present the disciple of Thales and Buffon, and while in the bath consider water as the principle of all things; should water therefore occasion me to reason ill, you must accuse that element: that of the Seine is so bad that you ought to hold it in aversion. Many physicians believe it to be very unhealthy; whereas our water of Berlin is pure, and wholesome.

* Those who wear the cowl.

I shall add nothing further, except to assure you of my esteem, and to pray God to take you into his holy keeping.

L E T T E R XI.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, October 28, 1765.

WHILE your majesty is plunging into the waters of Landeck, I have nearly visited those of the Styx. An inflammation in my bowels had occasioned me to set one foot in the (shall I say fatal or favourable?) boat. I approached the end of all my ills, without regret, and had taken the precaution to intreat M. Watelet to assure your majesty that I expired full of gratitude, respect, and attachment to your person. At length, the ferryman of these dismal banks, after having hesitated some days, declared he would not carry me; nor do I know when he will be disposed to grant me a passage; though it seems to me I drag on life at a little distance from the shore, from which he drove me. My health is more than ever languid; I have almost continual head-aches, and sleep,

sleep, which has forsaken me, does not return; so that I am incapable of application.

To this affliction is added the fear of having displeased your majesty, in not accepting the kind offers you have deigned to make me. I intreat you would remain perfectly persuaded I speak nothing but the truth, when I assure you my ill health and want of strength, increased by my last illness, are the sole causes which attach me, not to a country which rejects me, but to the climate in which I was born. Let me add, if any thing can recompense me for my loss in remaining in France, and the hopes of tranquillity I might enjoy with your majesty, it is the interest which my friends and even the public took, in my favour, when I was wavering between life and death. This taught me that the esteem of worthy men did not depend on the wretched pension which I am still refused, and concerning which I have long ceased to trouble myself.

I perceive, from the judgment your majesty has passed on my work on the Jesuits, that you wished me to have been more circumstantial; but it seemed to me that the part of the subject which relates to their doctrine, institution, policy and writers, was sufficiently known; and that to have developed the secret springs, which
have

have accelerated the destruction of this dangerous society, would have been attended with peril. I therefore thought it improper to dwell on the first, and was obliged to pass lightly over the latter, and be satisfied with giving hints to readers, who, like your majesty, would be able to comprehend that more was meant than met the ear. I thought it more useful, particularly for the good of France, to do that which no one hitherto had dared to do; that is, to depict both factions as equally odious, and especially the Jansenists, whom the destruction of the Jesuits had already rendered insolent; and who might become dangerous, should not reason reduce them to their proper rank.

I am informed your majesty is in good health; that the waters have been perfectly successful; and that, while you imagined yourself in company only with Thales, Hippocrates, for the good of your subjects, made one of the party. Your majesty's convalescence consoles me for my own ill health. A hero and philosophic king is much more necessary to the world than I am. Oh! that my frail and feeble machine might be permitted once more to lay that affection at your majesty's feet which I owe you; which your virtues, great actions, and benefits
have

have engraved on my heart, and which will end only with my life !

I am with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R XII.

From the King.

November 23, 1765.

I PERCEIVE, by your letter, your mind is as much diseased as your body ; which doubly afflicts me. I shall neither attempt to cure the one nor the other ; for your Geometricians have constitutions peculiar to themselves, and a more elevated manner of thinking than the rest of mankind. Were I conversing with some man of literature, I should tell him that pensions were never, in any country, a proof of merit ; that Ovid, banished as he was, is equal in fame to, or rather surpasses the tyrant by whom he was oppressed ; that, if wealth gave wit, no people would have more than C. P. and their fellows ; and thus that men of literature would do well to believe that merit, wit, and the fame which attends on them, appertain to the man, and not to his titles. My man of letters would

be consoled ; would write and be admired, as formerly, and would be happy.

This reasoning, not being supported by $xx + y$, cannot thus nakedly be presented to the sublime sciences ; though it is not the less founded on a just estimate ; on a comparison between the gifts of nature and fortune ; on a precise idea of what will most certainly attract the esteem of man, and what most merits that esteem ; and on the retrospect which ought to console every great man, for the injustice he suffers, by recollecting that other great men have suffered greater injustice. I own that I ought rather to have cited Galileo and Socrates than Ovid ; but, as we were speaking of the Jesuits and not of the antipodes, as your statuary is not prevented from adorning your altars with images, and as your beverage is not hemlock, I was better pleased to adduce an author who inspires man with pleasure, than those by whom, as it is pretended, he has been enlightened.

Were I treating on this subject with a soldier, I should tell him, recollect that Caius Marius was never greater, and never displayed more courage than when, proscribed and accosted on the African shore, he answered the officer of the prætor, who ordered him to retire—"Be-
gone,"

“ gone, and say thou hast seen Caius Marius
 “ seated on the ruins of Carthage !” It is in
 misfortune that fortitude becomes necessary. I
 would lecture my warrior on the morality of
 the Stoics. But what is morality? Alas ! it is
 out of fashion. Our age is frantic after curve
 lines. Yet, in my apprehension, all the calcula-
 tions which are so ingeniously imagined are in-
 ferior to those principles which teach us to go-
 vern the raging passions, and by which men
 learn to enjoy that small degree of happiness of
 which their nature is capable.

I should never have done, were I to repeat
 all that has been said on this subject. I cannot
 however persuade myself that you will not de-
 cide according to what has lately happened; or
 that you will not deprive your enemies of the
 satisfaction of supposing they have killed you by
 their persecutions. I shall be happy to see you,
 be the occasion that procures me this happiness
 what it may; and I hope that Time, that
 mighty monarch, will draw his sponge over the
 past, and cause you to recover your health,
 cheerfulness, and ease: in which hope I
 pray, &c.

L E T T E R XIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, May 19, 1766.

I TAKE the earliest opportunity to inform your majesty that M. de la Grange has received your proposal with equal respect and gratitude; that he thinks himself but too fortunate to have merited the bounty of a king like you, and to be on the point of meriting it still more by his labours; that he has asked permission of the king of Sardinia, his sovereign, to accept your offers; that the king of Sardinia has promised to give him an answer immediately, and has kindly led him to hope that his request will not be rejected.

I therefore believe M. de la Grange will not be long before he will come to replace M. Euler; and I dare assure your majesty that, both with respect to abilities and industry, he will be an excellent substitute; and that, in character and conduct, he will never excite the least division, or disturbance, in the academy. I take the liberty to intreat your majesty's particular kindness, in behalf of a man of such rare merit, and who is as estimable for his sentiments

ments as for the superiority of his genius. I think myself exceedingly fortunate to have succeeded in this affair, and to have procured so excellent a person for your majesty's academy: it is an event that gives a satisfaction to my mind which it is long since I before have felt, and of the effects of which I am certain my health will be sensible. I may at length flatter myself I have accomplished a thing agreeable to your majesty, honourable to your kingdom, and advantageous to your academy; and that I have thus afforded your majesty new marks of the sentiments of gratitude, inviolable attachment, and profound respect, with which during life I shall remain, &c.

L E T T E R XIV.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, May 26, 1766.

ALL the letters I receive from M. de la Grange assure me of the firm resolution he has taken, to profit by the offers your majesty has been pleased to make him, which are as honour-

able as they are advantageous. If he have not yet departed from Turin, it is neither his fault nor mine, but that of the ministers of the king of Sardinia; who, not daring absolutely to refuse their consent, have deferred it as long as possible; hoping that he might change his opinion. But he tells me his opinion is not to be changed. I have no doubt that, should your majesty think proper to request the dismissal of M. de la Grange, from the king of Sardinia, it will be immediately obtained; in which case, as he will as immediately set out, it would be well if your majesty would give orders relative to the expence of the journey. It is very singular that M. Euler, after the favours which he and his family have received of your majesty, during an abode of twenty-six years, should so easily obtain his dismissal; and that M. de la Grange, whose fortune they have not thought proper to secure in his own country, is obliged to solicit as a favour permission to go and enjoy, elsewhere, that justice which a great king renders his talents.

Your majesty wishes to have an astronomer, and I believe M. de Castillon to be a proper person; especially as he can educate his son in the same studies, and enable him to be his successor, should that be required. But it will be necessary that your majesty should issue orders

to repair the observatory, of which it was in great need, when I saw it, three years ago. But I perceive, perhaps a little too late, that I here act, or appear to act, the part of president of the academy, which cannot have a more worthy or more enlightened president than its protector,* and which, to obtain what is just, has only to make the proposition to this great king.

The prince of Brunswic is here esteemed, beloved, and sought after by every body. He has been at the academies, and I have had the honour to read a memoir in his presence, at the academy of sciences. He was yesterday at the French academy, and I believe was not disgusted with the manner of his reception. All are so eager to enjoy his company that I have only had the pleasure of conversing a few moments with him, to assure him of my respectful attachment to his august house, and to an uncle still more august.

I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

P. S. I have a favour to request from your majesty, which is that you would permit M. de la Grange to pass through Paris, in his road to

* After the death of Maupertuis, the king appointed himself perpetual president of his academy. It is said, he determined never more to entrust that office to another person. T.

Berlin. It is true, this will increase the length of his journey; but, not to mention the pleasure I shall have to see him, I can inform him of several things, concerning the academy, which it is right he should know; that he may be of the greater utility in his future office, which he will certainly fill with success.

L E T T E R X V.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, July 11, 1766.

M. De la Grange must have written, some time since, to testify his profound gratitude to your majesty, and his inclination to accept your offers. I am surpris'd that the expected permission of the king of Sardinia should be so long delayed; but the court of Turin, as your majesty better than any person knows, is not hasty in coming to a determination. I however shall be delighted to see M. de la Grange at Berlin, since he will be an excellent substitute for M. Euler, and much more useful to the academy than I could be. This is no false modesty, but the simple truth. M. de la Grange is young,
and

and I am almost old ; his ardour is rising, mine is on the decline ; he is getting up, and I am going to bed.

Your majesty it is said is desirous to have an astronomer. If you need only one, and have not formed other views, relative to M. de Castillon, from the particular study which he has made of astronomy and optics, I think him a very proper person for the place. If I do not mistake, the observatory of the academy is in need of repairs, and improvements ; at least if it be in the state in which I saw it three years ago. Be this as it may, I wait the ultimate orders of your majesty, if you should have any to give. I flatter myself you will do justice to my zeal, and the desire I have to be useful to the academy ; and it is for this reason that I propose M. de Castillon.

The hereditary prince of Brunswic is departed with the general esteem, and praises, of all those who have had the happiness to be acquainted with him ; and I imagine he is well satisfied with his reception, of which, past all doubt, he was highly worthy. We have the duke de Deux-Ponts here, who is by no means so popular, though he had the honour to command that fine army of the empire which distinguished itself so much, in the last war, and which contended with the Swedes for fame.

I know

I know not whether I have mentioned an abridgment of ecclesiastical history, printed at Berne. The place of printing it was well chosen, and brings to my mind the song which begins—*Bernons Bernis, puisqu'il nous berne* *. It is an edifying work, and the preface in particular deserves to be read. It seems to me to be by the hand of the master †; and, be the author who he will, Reason ought to return him her thanks.

I am with the most profound respect, and every sentiment of gratitude and inviolable attachment, which I shall eternally preserve, &c.

P. S. I have just received a letter from M. Bitaubé, who seems most gratefully affected by your majesty's kindness, and determined to merit it more and more.

* This is a play on words, which cannot be translated. *Berner* signifies to ridicule, or toss in a blanket; *Bernis* was the well-known cardinal and minister of whom the king speaks, in his History of the Seven Years War. T.

† *De main de maitre*; the signature, or substitute for a name, under which some of the king of Prussia's works were published. T.

L E T T E R XVI.

From the King.

July, 26, 1766.

THE fleur de la Grange will soon be at Berlin. He has obtained the dismissal he solicited; and to your cares and recommendation am I indebted for having replaced a half-blind mathematician, by a mathematician with both his eyes, which will especially please the anatomical members of my academy. The modesty with which you compare yourself to the fleur de la Grange raises instead of detracting from your merit; nor will it deceive me, concerning the manner in which I ought to think of and esteem you. Our academy has a sufficient supply of members at present. We have the fleur Castillon and his son, who observe the heavens. The building appropriated to the academy and the observatory are both under repair.

M. Euler, who is in love even to madness with the great and little bear, has travelled northward to observe them more at his ease. The ship which bore him and his *xz* and *yy* has been wrecked. All is lost, which is a pity, for there were materials enough to have formed
fix

fix volumes, in folio, of memoirs in figures from beginning to end; and Europe, in all probability, will be deprived of the agreeable amusement which such a course of reading would have afforded. While Euler is proceeding toward the north, my nephew is travelling southward. He thinks the French nation the most civil and most gallant of any in Europe; and, to speak in your own style, supposes your politeness toward foreigners increases in the inverse ratio of the square of the ills that have been done you.

You tell me of a chronological abridgment of church history, with which I am unacquainted. I seldom read prefaces; I have heard however that the author of this preface is equally insolent and impudent, and that he has had the impertinence to prove, by a dissertation, that *Jean le Blanc* meant no more than *Jean Farine* *.

It is said they are still in the habit of burning books in France. This may be one resource in a hard winter: for should wood fail books will not, provided the writing and not the writer be burned. That would be a little too serious, and I should begin to be out of temper, if they collected faggots for certain philosophers, in behalf of whom I shall always interest myself.

I pray God, &c.

* *Jean Farine* signifies much the same as *Tom Fool*. T.

L E T T E R XVII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, September 12, 1766.

M. De la Grange arrived here on the 2d instant, agreeable to the permission your majesty granted him to pass through Paris. We have daily met, and I find him full of gratitude for your majesty's bounties, and very desirous of acting agreeable to the opinion you have formed of him. Your academy will not only acquire a very great mathematician, at least equal to any man at present in Europe, but a true philosopher in every possible sense of the word; superior to the prejudices and superstitions of men; without ambition or intrigue; only delighting in labour and tranquillity, and of the most mild and sociable temper.

He has intreated me to request a favour of your majesty, which certainly will be obtained with facility. M. Euler was the Director of the mathematical class, and it appears quite natural that M. de la Grange should succeed to that place, since your majesty has sent for him to be the substitute of M. Euler, of which he is very capable. If however your majesty should have
other

other views, relative to the place of Director, M. de la Grange, well satisfied with the fifteen hundred crowns which your majesty is pleased to grant him, will not insist on this point; he only intreats your majesty would be kind enough to name a Director before his arrival, in order that the court of Turin, which would not detain him, and which yet is vexed at his loss, should not imagine that M. de la Grange, at his first coming, should meet an apparent kind of disgrace. It is necessary to the advantage of science and letters, which your majesty protects, not to give those by whom they are neglected the smallest cause of triumph, who would be very happy did the Learned not find in your majesty that honour and asylum which they merit.

I imagine, sire, that M. de la Grange will be at Berlin about the 15th of October. His arrival will not be delayed by the short trip which reasons of most respectable friendship oblige him to make to London; for M. de la Grange will deduct the time, his journey will take, from that which your majesty allowed him to remain with me. Beside that the passage from London to Berlin, by sea, will be much more short, less embarrassing, and less expensive, than that by land from Paris; because of the difficulty of the roads, the inconvenience of carriages, and his
ignorance

ignorance of the (German) language, which would have rendered it tedious and difficult.

M. de la Grange has spoken to me of another excellent person, whom he imagines your majesty might easily acquire, for your military service, and in addition to that for your academy. This person is the chevalier Daviet de Foncenex; a man of family and much merit, especially as an engineer. M. de la Grange is persuaded he would be a very proper person to form a superior school of this kind. At present he is at sea, in the service of the king of Sardinia, where he is ill satisfied with his treatment. His return will be in the month of November. Your Majesty may enquire, concerning him, of some of the Piedmontese officers who are in your service; for M. de la Grange would not write directly on the subject, for reasons which your majesty will easily comprehend; though he seems to me convinced that your majesty would make an excellent acquisition in M. de Foncenex. Permit me to congratulate myself for having at length given your majesty marks of my attachment and zeal, by procuring a member for your academy, who will be much more useful than I could be, and who is formed to do it the highest honour, by his labours and abilities. My ill health has almost extinguished

the

the little ardour and genius nature had given me, and I must think of retirement. Yet never will those sentiments of gratitude, admiration, inviolable attachment, and profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R XVIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, September 14, 1766.

M. De la Grange will have the honour to present your majesty with this letter. I have every reason to believe, from the knowledge I have of his fortunate genius, his arduous industry, and the gentleness of his character, that your majesty will be pleased I have procured your academy a man of his merit. I do not hesitate to affirm that his fame, which is already great, will continually increase; and that the sciences will have an eternal obligation to you, for the honourable and advantageous situation in which you are pleased to place this learned man; whom, as a worthy and respectable philosopher, I take the liberty to consign to your majesty's protection. My great regret is that I could not accompany him; but a feeble

state of health, which requires the utmost care, deprives me of this happiness. Perhaps it may strengthen, and I will then immediately profit by such a blessing, once more to lay those sentiments of respect and gratitude, which I shall ever preserve, at your majesty's feet.

I was a few days since informed of the decision, worthy of Solomon, given by your majesty; which is the punishment to which, as it is said, you would have condemned the unfortunate people of Abbeville, who have been lately murdered in France, for not having taken off their hats, when a procession was passing, and for having sung a song. Your majesty would justly have too ill an opinion of the French nation, did I not assure you that this judgment, as atrocious as it is absurd, has made every heart revolt in France, which was not destitute of humanity and common sense. Philosophy, fire, has great need of that protection, enlightened as it is powerful, which your majesty grants: the fury with which it is persecuted is greater than ever, on the part of the priests and parliaments; who amid the civil war they carry on occasionally agree on a few days truce, that they may combine to torment sages.

These parliaments, very unworthy of the favourable opinion foreigners have conceived of

them, are if possible more degraded than the clergy themselves, from the intolerant and persecuting spirit by which they are governed. The members of them are neither magistrates nor even citizens, but poor bigotted Jansenists; who, had they the power, would make us groan under the despotism of theological absurdities, and in that dark ignorance which is the result of superstition and oppression.

It is my opinion, sire, that the only part the philosopher can take, who is unable to forsake his country, is partly to yield to and partly to stem the abominable torrent: to speak only a quarter of the truth, if it be dangerous to speak the whole; which quarter may be always spoken to advantage, and without injury to the author. In more fortunate times, the other three quarters shall in their turn be spoken; either successively or at once; when we no longer have either parliaments or priests; or when parliaments become just, and priests sage.

This letter will be delivered to your majesty long after its date, for I give it to M. de la Grange, on his departure for London. I regret some few days which he meant to have bestowed on me, but which he dedicates to this journey. His arrival at Berlin will not be delayed, because the passage by sea, from London to
Berlin,

Berlin, will be much shorter and less troublesome than by land from this place.

I am with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R XIX.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, November 21, 1766.

THE letter your majesty did me the honour to write has given me the most sensible pleasure. I perceive you are not dissatisfied with the conversations you have had with M. de la Grange, and that you have found this great mathematician to be, as I have had the honour to pronounce him, an excellent philosopher, and well read in polite literature*. I dare affirm your majesty's satisfaction will gradually increase, and that you will find him as worthy of your kindness from character as from abilities.

* In the *Correspondance Secrette de la Cour de Berlin*, Lettre LI. we find count Mirabeau petitioning M. de Calonne to grant this same M. de la Grange a pension, because he had been left in poverty and neglect after twenty years severe labour. Mirabeau speaks of him in very high and perhaps extravagant terms. T.

He appears to me penetrated with gratitude, by the manner in which your majesty received him; and, enchanted by the conversation you have condescended to hold with him, he is firmly resolved to exert his whole powers, that he may equal the opinion your majesty has conceived of him, and by which he is infinitely flattered.

Yes, M. de la Grange will act thus, nor do I think I run any risk by such an assertion: he will surpass us all, or at least prevent our being regretted! For my own part I am no longer any thing better than an invalid officer in geometry; my mind is no longer capable of the application which this study requires, and my health, though passable, is only supported by ease and regimen. I am not without hope that I shall one day again see your majesty, and again lay these sentiments, with which I am so justly penetrated, at your feet. Your majesty pretends if I do not make haste I shall find you in your dotage, but I am well convinced you never will doat; though, should this misfortune happen, you need not fear my presence, for let my understanding decrease but a little and I shall doat too.

I have admired, and have caused the philosophers of this country likewise to admire, all which your majesty has done me the honour to
say

say on the abuses and atrocious absurdities of criminal jurisprudence in France;* on the equal though opposite fanaticism of our parliaments and priests; and on the part which a prudent man ought to take among men so hot headed and so foolish. This, sire, is the very part I do take. To despise the madman and honour the sage is my motto, and this is nearly all I can do in favour of reason, to which I can no longer be of much use, except by my good wishes.

But the first, the most sincere and most constant of my prayers, are those which I make for your majesty; their ardour is equal to the sentiments of respect, admiration, and eternal gratitude, with which I remain, &c.

P. S. I take the liberty to recommend M. de Castillon to your majesty's goodness. He is desirous to obtain the pension annexed to the place of astronomer, the functions of which he performs; and I think his request reasonable. Your majesty knows I have never deceived you, and this induces me to take the freedom of speaking to you with so much confidence.

* The Basil edition says the letter of the king, here referred to, is lost; but from this passage there is greater reason to suppose it is suppressed. T.

L E T T E R XX.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, December 12, 1766.

YOUR majesty will immediately receive, or have perhaps already received, a very flight and feeble performance by one of your admirers, the fifth volume of my *Melanges de Literature*,* in behalf of which I request the same indulgence and kindness with which your majesty has been pleased to honour the preceding volumes. It contains little which is not already known to your majesty. I have however made some alterations, not always for the better, but that I might not too much offend the quacks of every kind, who wish to lord it over the understanding. I have inserted, with such additions as appear to me necessary for the public, and such modifications as certain subjects required, most of those explanations which I had the honour to present to your majesty on my *Elements of Philosophy*. There are however certain articles which I have thought proper to suppress, because I have been educated, not like Mr. Chicanery, in the fear of God and the bailiffs, but in the fear of God and

* Literary Miscellanies.

the priests, and of parliaments, who are as bad as the priests.

I most humbly intreat your majesty in some vacant moments, or rather in some moments of recreation, for you have none of the former, just to cast a look at this volume, and instruct me with your reflections and views. You will find in me that docility which a philosopher owes to him whom he regards as his chief and his model. What renders the volume interesting to me is, the opportunity I have there had in various passages to express, with that truth which I profess, the eternal sentiments of admiration and respect with which I am penetrated toward the hero of the age, sentiments which can end only with life.

Your majesty will perhaps soon see an heir born to your illustrious house. I request I may be previously informed; assured as I am of all the joy which I shall feel at the event. This heir, sire, should fate grant him, will have no need to travel far in search of great examples; he will find them by his side; he will read the life of his great uncle whom he will despair ever to equal.

I am, with most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R XXI.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, February 6, 1767.

YOUR majesty, I believe, will do me the justice to be persuaded that I never shall take the liberty to speak to you on any affairs, except those in which literature and the sciences are interested. I have not however been able to refuse the prince of Salm, who honours me with his kindness, the request he made me to convey a letter from him to your majesty. You, sire, will determine whether his demands are just, and whether you ought to grant him your support. On this occasion I shall only allow myself to say that the prince of Salm appears to me worthy of your majesty's favour, by his personal qualities, and those sentiments of respect and admiration with which I have continually known him penetrated, in behalf of the hero of the age. To these sentiments he adds that of eternal gratitude for the kindness with which he has already been honoured by your majesty.

I, like your majesty, occasionally receive memoirs sufficiently violent against * * *. Should this continue, she will be more worthy of pity
than

than hatred, for the torture is applied without mercy. It is pleasant to observe how the author of these memoirs, at each lash he gives poor ***, is panic-struck the moment the arm falls, lest vengeance * should repay him a hundred fold, and to see him pass his life, like St. Peter, in denying and repenting.

A propos of St. Peter, whose patrimony it is said will soon be on sale. Your majesty ought to be the purchaser. How glad should I be to receive a brief of indulgence, which I flatter myself I should not be refused ! The truth is, the vicar of Jesus Christ, it is said, is on the eve of bankruptcy; that the people of Rome are dying with hunger; that his holiness has shut up the opera house, to appease the wrath of God ; and that the ancient Romans, who required nothing but bread and public exhibitions, would think the modern Romans much to be pitied, who have neither the one nor the other.

M. de Stainville, who treated the French nation so ill at Spa, as I was informed three years ago by your majesty, has lately treated his wife worse, whom he has shut up in a convent, because she wished to impose the children of a player upon him as his own. If every husband in the same predicament were to act with the

* The French reads justice. T.

same rigour, the trade of our wives of fashion would soon be ruined.

The father of M. de la Grange is unhappy at not hearing from him, and fears lest their reciprocal letters should be intercepted at Turin. Let me intreat your majesty to interpose in his behalf with the king of Sardinia, that the son may be permitted to write to his father; for I cannot imagine that M. de la Grange has mistaken your majesty for Jesus Christ, to follow whom he has renounced both father and mother, agreeable to the *morality* of the gospel.

M. de Catt will give your majesty the memoir which I read at the academy of sciences, on the day when the hereditary prince of Brunswick honoured it with his presence. It is on a useful subject, on which I employ myself as much as my feeble health will permit, for I have more need of sleep and digestion than of papal indulgencies. I find it very difficult to keep on passable terms with these two deities; I say deities, for I hold them to be the most beneficent of any with which the world is acquainted; for this reason I am determined, according to the prudent advice of your majesty, to do nothing by which they may be disturbed. Nature has given me but a poor patrimony of this kind, nor is there

there any need of my folly to totally waste it by the dissipation of the mind.

I know not whether your majesty has received the fifth volume of my miscellanies, which I had the honour to mention in my last letter. Let me intreat you to tell me your opinion with your usual goodness. Voltaire seems satisfied with it ; but he is much more delighted, as well he may be, with the letters which your majesty writes to him, of which he speaks incessantly, and with transport.

I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R XXII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, February 10, 1767.

I HAD the honour a few days since to write a long letter to your majesty, by which I fear I intruded upon your precious moments, and made an abusive use of your kindness. This letter shall be more short, for I do not wish often to commit the same fault. I shall confine myself to present to your majesty the letter and work that accompany this, on the part of one
of

of the men of letters whom I most love and esteem, M. Marmontel, one of the most distinguished members of the French academy.

The work, sire, appears to me worthy of being read and judged by a hero; it contains important maxims which your majesty has long put in practice; and the most flattering recompense the author can desire for his labours is to be honoured by the suffrage of your majesty, testified by yourself.

I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R XXIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

April 10, 1767.

WITH the utmost circumspection only do I dare speak to your majesty on an affair which no way relates to literature; but a person in place, to whom I have obligations, has intreated me to present the memoir which accompanies this to your majesty. The subject of it is a Frenchman who is said to be rather unfortunate than guilty, and of whom, it appears, even his judges gave favourable testimony. Your majesty

jeſty has been kind enough to abridge the term of his imprifonment by one half; yet this term is expired, and he is ſtill in priſon, contrary to your orders, as it is ſuppoſed. I am well aſſured he will obtain redreſs if he deſerve it; and I humbly pray your majeſty would be pleaſed to command information to be ſent me of the ſentence that was pronounced, that I may give an account of it to the perſons who recommended this buſineſs to my notice.

Your majeſty has done me the honour to inform me you are not of my opinion, in certain paſſages of my laſt work, concerning poetry and muſic. I nevertheleſs flatter myſelf, if I had the honour of converſing with you, on theſe ſubjects, you would then find I think in reality like you; and that perhaps I only differ in my mode of expreſſion. I ſhould be induced to imagine I was wrong, ſhould our opinions be eſſentially contradictory. For example, I join your majeſty in laughing at the late count Algarotti, on the pretended power of painting duſt; nor do I think the art capable of depicting all things. I only think, and have ſaid, that ſounds may inſpire ſimilar feelings to thoſe which are inſpired by certain objects of ſight, and thus excite or recal the idea of ſuch objects.

M. Marmontel will certainly be very much

flattered by the observations your majesty has sent him on his poeticks, and will answer your majesty with more satisfaction than he will the Sorbonne, on his Belifarius. Would you believe, fire, he is actually at war with these good doctors, for having said that Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, and the other Frederics of past ages, over whom the heroes of the present age have the advantage of having been baptised, may, notwithstanding the want of such baptismal passport, be now in paradise, with Cato, Socrates, Aristides, and some other fellows of the like kidney, whom paganism produced? May I die, fire, if I know any thing where these good folks are; but, if they are in the same place with the defunct doctors, I believe them to be in hell; and for this reason, that the wranglings to which they are obliged to listen must be to them the worst of torments.

I have read and re-read, a thousand times, with the most tender and respectful gratitude, all that your majesty has been pleased to add, with your own hand, in the letter which you have done me the honour to address to me. You may well say you cannot understand the contradictory follies which abound in certain countries, no more than you can those delightful and important quarrels which are maintained

between our pedants of the coif and our pedants of the band.

While these vermin are worrying each other, the eyes of all Europe are fixed on your majesty. Men talk of Poland, Dantzick, and the Diffidents; concerning whom I imagine your majesty troubles yourself but little. In fine, they talk of I know not what! But whither am I wandering? I think I hear your majesty answering me as Achilles did Agamemnon:

Vous lisez de trop loin dans les secrets des Dieux.*

I did not wait your majesty's commands to assure the rotund abbé d'Olivet that you were acquainted with the *e* mute wherever you met the gentleman; and that *crép* was certainly a German word. There are more essential faults in the prosody of this fat ex-jesuit; for such he has the honour to be; and I would advise foreigners not to place too much faith in a great number of his rules.

The hereditary prince of Brunswick, who is come to remain here a few days, was received with the same welcome as he was on his former visit; and I flatter myself that, though he should not think us very reasonable, he will at

* Too far you search the secrets of the gods.

least think us very polite, and just, as far as respects himself. I have more than once had the satisfaction to express the sentiments with which I am penetrated for your majesty to this prince, who can assure you of the veneration in which you are held, by all estimable men of letters.

Whether your majesty make peace or war, the thing in which I am most interested is that you should be in good health, that you should long continue to be the admiration of Europe, and that you would kindly be pleased occasionally to remember the eternal gratitude, inviolable attachment, and profound respect, with which I shall all my life remain, &c.

L E T T E R XXIV.

From the King.

May 5, 1767.

IT is impossible for me to answer you on the subject of the prisoner for whom you interest yourself, because I am equally unacquainted with his crime and his name. Information has been sent for, to the tribunals of Embden and Cleves; and we must wait their report, to learn

learn of what this man is accused. Be that as it may, I flatter myself the colleges of justice, in my dominions, will not carry the forgetfulness of forms, and rashness of sentence, to the same excess as is done in the French courts of justice; nor can I think an innocent man has been condemned, unless, during the war, things have happened the knowledge of which never reached me.

You press me to tell you what I think of the additions you have made to your literary essays. I think I recollect having written to you that I read that part of the work in which you condescend to sink the science of *the sublime geometry* to the level of my ignorance, and that I highly approved of the wisdom and circumspection with which you treated of metaphysical subjects, delicate and dark as they are, for that I thought this the only manner of treating on them, without raising up a swarm of doctors, armed with anathemas and imprecations.

The part which relates to the fine arts is more free. Men are permitted to say all they please on history, poetry, and music, without dread of any inquisition; and, as the taste of readers is different, it would be difficult to find two persons whose opinions perfectly accord. Thus I, for example, have been in the habit of studying

history by beginning at the most remote æra, and continuing to the present time; because principles ought to be established before consequences should be drawn.

In poetry, I love every thing which speaks to the heart and imagination. I delight in fable*, and should be chagrined to see mythology, which is so fruitful in imagery, banished poetry. I do not mean to say that in poetry a use should be made of common-place imagery. But how many resources are there, for Genius, in the numerous charming allegories under which the ancients enveloped their physical knowledge? Though barbarians and fanatic priests may have destroyed the images of the gods of paganism, is it for men of letters, of the eighteenth century, to fall with a pitiless hand on all which those ages, in which arts and taste flourished, have produced most ingenious? In a word, the first duty of the poet is to please; and he must be free to seek wherever he can find aid; the only thing required of him is to be successful.

I dare not say I have detected some logical sophisms, in the thoughts of a famous geometri-

* The French reads *la politique et la fable*, which certainly must be some error of the press. Perhaps it should be *allegory* instead of *politics*. T.

cian, on music ; but I think there is an abuse of words, the different definition of which, perhaps, prevents me from being of the opinion of this great man.

He allows that music can only express the sensations of the soul; that consequently every thing which may appertain to the other senses has no connection with that of hearing. Yet he requires the composer to represent the rising of the sun. Does he not mean that he requires the composer to express that mild and tranquil joy which the progress of light inspires? That may be; but though we were to ascend from the lowest notes to the most acute, and again to descend, at the will of the geometrician, not the whole compass of the scale will form the least analogy between the sight of a fine morning and articulate sounds. Let us therefore only require of music to express the affections of the mind ; and let us beware how we imitate the croaking of frogs, or ravens; and of a hundred similar imitations, which are as vicious in music as they are in poetry. All things on earth, as well as the arts which are dedicated to our pleasures, have their limits; if we extend them beyond their sphere, we do but render them unnatural, instead of more perfect. I am only a dilettante, and do not decide on subjects of which I scarcely

can obtain a superficial knowledge; but you desired me to say what I think, and I have done as you desired.

As to the abbé d'Olivet, whose very humble servant I am, far from being angry with him for his *crép* or *crêpe*, I am under great obligations to him for having cited me; I now think myself a famous author, and assume airs of consequence, like those of a poet who has been quoted in the French academy. I recommend my solecisms and barbarisms to his indulgence; for, in this country, men are in greater dread of grammatical censure than of the censure of the Sorbonne, or even of the pope himself.

Prosperity to philosophers! The Jesuits are expelled from Spain! The throne of superstition is fapped, and will moulder away, in the coming age. Take good care, however, that it do not crush you in its fall; for the fall of all the thrones on earth are unequal to the vexation and persecutions which trouble the happiness of life. May your happiness be unalterable!

On which I pray God, &c.

LETTER XXV.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, July 3, 1767.

I DARE flatter myself your majesty is sufficiently apprised of my inviolable attachment, not to doubt that I am sensible of the loss you have lately suffered. Whatever interests your majesty has an interest in my heart; and whatever may increase, or diminish, your happiness, does not affect me less than that which may contribute to your fame.

I am equally flattered by and grateful for all your majesty has been pleased to say on my work, in the last letter with which you have deigned to honour me. Let me intreat you to receive my very humble thanks, for the praises you have been kind enough to bestow, and the criticism you have been pleased to add.

I do not believe that in what I have said, at least not in what I have thought, I differ essentially from your majesty. I have condemned only those who have confined themselves to common-place words and imagery; and certainly your majesty is less capable than any one of defending that kind of poetry, which so little resembles your own.

With respect to music, your majesty allows it may at least recal objects to the mind which are no part of it, by awakening sentiments in us similar to those which these objects inspire. I own I go a little farther; nor do I think my opinion wholly without foundation. But it is a subject so metaphysical, and consequently so liable to dispute, that I am not surpris'd one of the greatest musicians in Europe should think otherwise; nor do I imagine myself, especially in this point, by any means infallible.

I know not whether the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain will be of any great good to the cause of reason, while this kingdom shall continue to be governed by inquisitors and priests. I also think that, should your majesty ever banish the Jesuits from Silesia, you will not hesitate to proclaim the reason to all Europe; nor will you keep the motives of such proscription locked up in your heart.

It is said your majesty has had the goodness to grant an ensign's commission to the unfortunate young man, condemned by our lords of the parliament of Paris in the age of Frederic, to be burned alive, for having sung a comic song, and for having forgotten to kneel, when a procession was passing. I thank your majesty,
for

for this good work, in the name of philosophy and humanity.

Should your majesty think proper to name foreigners as associates to your academy, I take the liberty to recommend a man of merit to your kindness, who is a good geometrician and philosopher; the abbé Bossu; a correspondent to our academy of sciences at Paris, and of which he would long since have been a member, had he not lived in the country. He has gained two or three prizes at our academy, and I dare assure your majesty he will not degrade the list of academicians, at Berlin, whenever you shall think proper to increase the number of foreign associates; which indeed is a long list, in one respect, but short enough, in another.

My health is continually in as equivocal a state as is, at present, the society of the Jesuits in Spain. By the aid of regimen I have recovered my appetite, but my mind is almost totally incapable of labour. I should not take the liberty to mention such subjects to your majesty, had you not the kindness to question me. May fate add that strength and elasticity to your fibres of which she has deprived mine! I should need no better consolation.

I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R XXVI.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, December 14, 1767.

I HAD some time since the honour of receiving a letter from your majesty, on poetry and music, abounding in reason, wit, and the true Attic salt ; and which the most enlightened and at the same time the most merry philosopher would have been glad to have written. I have several times put my hand to the pen, or, as pedants say, put the pen to the hand *, to write some sort of an answer to that excellent letter ; but thrice has my pen dropped from my hand. I felt it was impossible by cold discussion to reply to acute and just reasoning, supported by excellent humour. Beside, to make head against an adversary like your majesty, it would at least be requisite that the little portion of mind which God has been pleased to give me should be wholly at my own disposal ; but the approach of ill weather has enfeebled the small remains of soul I possess ; and, should it long continue, I shall have the happiness finally of becoming an idiot. Still however I hope that,

* This is an idiomatic phrase in the French language. T,
should

should fate deprive me of this trifling residue of understanding, it will leave me a heart capable of feeling the goodness with which I am honoured by your majesty ; and of for ever preserving the most lively and the most affecting gratitude.

When your majesty shall think proper to increase the number of foreign associates at your academy, I take the liberty previously to propose the abbé Bossu, whom I mentioned in a preceding letter. He is a very good mathematician, and has gained several prizes, from the academy of sciences at Paris, and elsewhere. I wait your majesty's orders to propose him to the academy, and shall only act in this according to what you shall prescribe. I imagine your majesty remains satisfied with M. de la Grange, and continually congratulate myself for having procured the academy so excellent a member.

Since your majesty indulges me in speaking on whatever may interest the members of that illustrious body, I take the freedom a second time to recommend the professor de Castillon to your bounty. He requests your majesty would be pleased to grant him the salary of the place of astronomer, to aid him in the calculations and labours which that place requires ; or, which would to him be equally favourable, that you
would

would be pleased to grant the salary and apartments of *Observer* to his son, who is very capable of filling that place. It appears to me that M. de Castillon industriously and successfully applies himself to astronomy and optics; but that he is in need of a coadjutor, which his small income will not suffer him to procure.

If the precious moments of your majesty would permit, I should be very desirous of knowing what you think of the grammar of M. Beauzée, a work in two volumes, which I had the honour to send you. It seems to me to be learned and profound, but a little too scholastic.

Your majesty should also have received a dramatic piece, intitled *L'Honnête Criminel*,* the subject of which is interesting. Should you impart your reflections to me on these works, I shall inform the authors of them, who certainly would not fail to turn them to account.

The Jesuits are banished Naples, too; and it is said they soon will be expelled Parma; and thus the house of Bourbon will have entirely swept them out of their states. If I am not mistaken, your majesty has acted a most sage and just part, with respect to this dangerous race; that of not doing them harm, and of preventing them from doing harm to others. But this is a

* The honest Criminal.

part which every one is not able to act. It is more easy to oppress than to restrain, and to commit an act of violence than to perform an act of justice. The court of Rome however insensibly loses its best troops, and * * * *her* * forlorn hope. She seems insensibly to narrow her quarters, as if she would follow her army and begone. Ill got ill gone, said the late pope Benedict XIV. who, according to another proverb, could see as far into a mill-stone as he who made it a mill-stone. The Sorbonne, in the mean time, which profits by the power it still enjoys, has issued an excellent censure against *Belisaire* †. It is a master-piece of folly and absurdity; insomuch that the theologians themselves, except those who wrote it, are ashamed of it; theologians though they are!

But it is of small importance what such pedants may say and write, provided that your majesty be but happy, in health, and will be kind enough occasionally to remember the most profound respect, and the inviolable attachment with which I shall all my life remain, &c.

* *Ses*—her—his—or its. If the church, or any word esteemed still more sacred be insinuated, I cannot see the reason of this individual caution, when there is so little used in so many other passages. T.

† The Belisarius of Marmontel. T.

L E T T E R XXVII.

From the King.

January 7, 1768.

I THANK you for your new year's wishes in my behalf, and should have immediately answered, had I not been restrained by the diet of Ratisbon, the grave deliberations of which at present all relate to the compliments of the new year. The plurality of votes is for their suppression. You know that a certain fiscal counsellor, one Anis, was in his day my persecutor; and, as I fear censure, I am satisfied with daily wishing you well.*

If my last letter made you laugh, it is because I love to be merry on subjects that are capable of mirth; and because I have hourly so many grave, or wearisome, affairs in hand that I profit by every opportunity to unbend my mind. And why always meet philosophy with an austere brow? I love to unwrinkle the forehead of philosophers, and to joke concerning their opinions, which, when closely examined, have no great

* Here seems to be some allusion to and ridicule of persons or things in Germany, the spirit of which is lost to an English reader. T.

advantage

advantage the one over the other. The sage has said—Vanity of grandeur!—Vanity of philosophy! All is vanity!

Do not suppose, however, that I can only laugh. I caused the whole assembly of an academy, in which you interest yourself, to weep, some days since, on the subject of the discourse which I send you, according to custom, because you are a member.

I believe the son of Castillon is firmly installed in the tower of the observatory, and that Jupiter, Venus, Mars, and Mercury, will hereafter gravitate only as he shall bid. I made my bargain with him that we should have milder winters, and warmer springs. Hitherto indeed he has not kept to his agreement; but, as his reign has but lately commenced, it should seem that his power is not yet sufficiently confirmed, to insure the obedience of the planets.

I have had two new tragedies sent me from Paris: The Canadians; and Cosroes. The young authors do not write verses ill. They err in not making their work all of a texture, and in not preparing and producing their incidents naturally enough. They are in want of enlightened critics, who should guide them on a road in which he who has no conductor may easily lose himself. But, if the public treat them
severely,

severely, talents will be stifled which might hereafter bloom in perfection.

As for the talents of the Jesuits, they will bloom no more. They are driven out of half of Europe, and even out of Paraguay. Their possessions in other parts appear to me precarious. I will not answer for what may happen to them in Austria, should the empress queen die. For my own part, I shall tolerate them, while they continue peaceable, and murder nobody. The bigotry of our fathers died with themselves. Reason has dissipated the fog with which sectaries darkened the eyes of Europe. Those who are blind and cruel may still persecute: those who are enlightened and humane ought to be tolerant. Let odious persecution be a crime unknown to our age. This is what ought to be expected from the daily progress of philosophy. It were to be wished it could influence our manners as much as philosophy did the manners of the ancients. I pardon the stoics all the errors of their metaphysical reasoning, because of the great men which their morality formed. That sect will always be the first, with me, which has most influence on manners, and which will render the intercourse between men more safe, mild, and virtuous. Such is my manner of thinking,

the sole end of which is the happiness of mankind, and the advantage of society.

Is it not true that electricity, and all the prodigies it has hitherto discovered, have only served to excite curiosity? Is it not true that the doctrine of attraction and gravity has done nothing more than astonish the imagination? Is it not true that all the operations of chemistry are in the same predicament? But are robbers less numerous, or contractors less covetous? Are guardians become more scrupulous? Is there less envy, and is the hard heart become compassionate? Of what benefit will modern discoveries be to society, should philosophy neglect morality and manners, concerning which the ancients employed their whole powers?

I cannot address these reflections, which I have long had at heart, to a better person than one who is at present the Atlas of modern philosophy; and who, by his example and his writings, might restore the ancient virtue of the Greeks and Romans, and render to philosophy its former lustre.

On which I pray God, &c.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, January 29, 1768.

I HAVE received and read, with the utmost sensibility, the eulogium which your majesty has composed, on the young and worthy prince whom you have had the misfortune to lose. The work is equally honourable to the mind and sentiments of the hero by whom it is written. Virtue and eloquence weep for virtue and talents cut off in their bloom. The reader cannot avoid adding his tears to those of your majesty, while perusing a work so affecting and full of pathos. The only passage which I could have wished not to have met with, though the most affecting, the most pathetic of the whole, is that in which your majesty speaks of your approaching end. I know, sire, that a hero like you considers this last moment with tranquillity: yet I cannot but think your majesty ought to veil so afflicting an image, from the eyes of those who are tenderly and respectfully attached to you. Happily for their sensibility, a moment so painful appears to them more distant than it does to your majesty. Of this they even flatter

themselves they will not have the grief of being witnesses. While reading this mournful and eloquent peroration, I, from the bottom of my heart, addressed those beautiful lines from the seventeenth ode of the second book of Horace to your majesty, in which the poet intreated Mæcenas to suspend the complaints which the sight of approaching death drew from the favourite of Augustus : with this difference, that your majesty is of much more precious value to the world than Mæcenas was; that he feared death, which you have a thousand times braved ; and that my sentiments are more profound, and more just, than those of Horace.

However eloquent the description may be, of which I venture to complain to your majesty, I would rather, for your sake and my own, read the philosophic gaiety with which you treat subjects of philosophy themselves, at the same time that you make remarks both just and profound. Excellent reflections may for example be made, of this kind, on the procession which our holy father the Pope has lately ordained ; because the catholic religion has the misfortune no longer to be able to oppress, and persecute, the Dissidents, in Poland. This, it must be owned, is proclaiming the spirit of the catholic religion

very adroitly, and affording excellent sport to its enemies.

Your majesty is pleased to treat the sublime geometry a little cavalierly. I allow that it frequently is, as your majesty well observes, a luxury in which idle learning indulges: but to prove that it has often been useful we need only recollect the system of the world, the phenomena of which it so well explains. Not but I allow, with your majesty, that morality is still more interesting, and more especially deserving the study of philosophers. The misfortune is, it is every where mingled with religion, which has done it much injury.

I hear that M. de Castillon, the younger, has not the place of astronomer, which has been given to M. Bernouilli. The latter is, no doubt, a very proper person, but I take the freedom again to recommend the other to your majesty's bounty. If you would deign to appoint him assistant to his father, in astronomy, and add the pension of which he is in want, this estimable family would be under eternal obligations to you.

May you, sire, long write works like that which I have just read; on condition that their subject be not equally mournful, and particularly that the conclusion may not be so afflicting to your faithful servants. In these sentiments,

ments, and with the most profound respect, I shall, till the last sigh, remain, &c.

L E T T - E R XXIX.

From the King.

March 24, 1768.

THE eulogium you received was less written from a spirit of ostentation than from the love of truth. I can assure you the talent of the orator was but small, and that the unanimous testimony of his auditors naturally freed the author from that accusation. But I shall wave a subject too gloomy to be longer dwelt upon. I congratulate philosophers on the recent follies of the Grand Lama*. Scarcely could all your prayers have prevailed on Heaven to have inspired him with more silly thoughts. He resembles an old rope-dancer, who, although aged and infirm, attempts to repeat his former capers, falls, and breaks his neck. The thunder of excommunication has long grown rusty in the Vatican. Why take it from the arsenal to hurl it, with an impotent arm, at a time like the present; when

* Meaning the pope. T.

the master is as much out of credit as his earthly vicar; when reason proudly rejects all mystic and unintelligible jargon; when the vulgar themselves are less absurd than their governors formerly were; and when sovereigns, by their own authority, abolish the order of the Jesuits, who served as the body-guards of popery?

You will see that the Pope will be as ill treated, at Paris, as the philosophers; and that the eternal father of Versailles will take the gallantry of the holy see to his grandson * very ill. Be these prophecies accomplished or be they not, I shall have the consolation of another excommunicated comrade, which is a thing the more amusing because it is the first event of the kind which has happened in my time.

I have seen an epistle, in which poor Marmontel charitably wishes a female stage-dancer should enjoy salvation. It should seem that the censures of the Sorbonne have not yet been able to correct him of the horrible vice of toleration! As he is desirous every body should be saved, I hope he will make a generous effort in favour of the duke of Parma and me, so that Marmontel, the duke of Parma, the dancer and

* The duke of Parma, infant of Spain.

T.

I may

I may proceed immediately to Paradise, in despite of the Sorbonne and the Pope.

I hear that you are busy in making additions to your works, of which I am very glad; for no person writes a more clear and intelligible style than you do on the abstract parts of geometry.

We hear little at present of Voltaire. Letters from Switzerland say he is busy writing a work intended for the empress of Russia. I know not what this can mean. He may compose a new code of laws for the Poles, Tartars, or Persians.

I have had a succession of illness, by which I have been much incommoded. But who has not the same? We are told it is for the exercise of our patience. I wish your health was no longer liable to try your patience, and that your body, as healthy as your mind, might not resemble those scabbards which, according to the proverb, are cut through by the sword. If it can be any consolation to you, I would have you know there are persons who are sincerely interested in your preservation, and in every thing which can be of advantage to you.

On which I pray God, &c.

L E T T E R XXX.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, April 15, 1768,

I HAVE already had the honour to return your majesty my very humble thanks, for the beautiful eulogium you were kind enough to send me ; and to inform you how eloquent and pathetic the work appeared to me to be. Every person of feeling who has read it has been equally affected ; and all offer up prayers that nature may add, to the days of the august orator, those which she cut off from the life of his illustrious nephew, so worthy to be thus celebrated.

If any thing can equal this eloquent work, it will be the excellent reflections your majesty has made, on the excommunication of the duke of Parma. The comparison you have drawn, between the Grand Lama and a rope dancer, who, old and infirm, wishes to repeat his youthful capers and breaks his neck, is as just and philosophic as it is pleasant. It is repeated from mouth to mouth, and is of more worth than all the long memorials of the council of Spain, or the parliament of Paris, on this fine subject.

The excommunicated Marmontel, to whom
I read

I read the passage, in your majesty's letter, which regards himself, has charged me to say that Paradise, Purgatory, Limbo, or Hell itself, are indifferent to him; provided he has but the honour of being in either place one of your majesty's attendants.

I know not whether Voltaire be or be not excommunicated, but he does not suppose himself so to be; for he has kept Easter with great pomp, in his manor-church of Ferney; and, after the ceremony, preached an excellent sermon, against thieving, to his peasantry. He pretends he is ruined, and consequently has cleared his house, even of his niece, whom he has sent to Paris. He remains alone, in company with a Jesuit* named father Adam, who cannot, he says, be called *the first of men*. He affirms that his serene highness, the duke of Wirtemberg, is greatly in his debt, and is an ill pay-master; and would be apt to say, of this prince, as an Italian painter did to your majesty, when I was present, who had worked for him without being paid—"He is a man
" who does not love virtue†."

* *Seul*, avec un Jesuit.

† So spelt in French to imitate the Italian pronunciation, *virtuo*, of the word virtue, which signifies either virtue, taste, or knowledge. T.

Your majesty infinitely flatters me, by wishing for a new volume of my works. I have some materials, for such a volume; but I know not whether my poor head will permit me to put them together. I shall leave it in repose, for a year; and, to kill time in the mean while, shall print two volumes of algebraic scrawls, which have been written these two years, but which are but little interesting either to your majesty or me.

The countess de Boufflers-Rouverel, a lady of great wit and merit, and whom the late madame de Pompadour, of happy memory, hated, because of her admiration of your majesty, has desired me to recommend the count de Boufflers, her son, a prudent, well-educated, well-informed youth, who will very soon arrive at Berlin, and who is to be presented to your majesty, by the English ambassador. This young lord deserves to be distinguished, for his conduct and knowledge, from the generality of our French youth of quality.

I flatter myself that the return of fine weather, and exercise, will restore your majesty to perfect health. I am not astonished you have suffered, during the severe winter we have had, and hope you are at present better. May you long be preserved, by fate, for the good of your kingdom,

dom, the example of Europe, and for the honour and advantage of letters and philosophy.

I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R XXXI.

From the King.

May 7, 1768.

A GOD, favourable to philosophers, has sent a giddy and a lying spirit, instead of the Holy Spirit, to our sanctified father the Pope; which has inspired him with mighty errors, and extravagant enterprises. It is said that, with uplifted arm, he is about to hurl his thunder against the most Christian, most Catholic, and most Faithful Kings. You will find he will soon adopt the Defender of the Faith, and the heretical philosopher of Sans Souci, that he may not be alone, and without attendants. Posterity will be surprised to learn what giants the Pope has dared to excommunicate. He certainly merits that these sacred majesties should pelt him with apples. What he has refused them does not, in reality, merit to be asked. A good leg of mutton is more nutritive than all the flesh that is virginally divine. I know not what will be
the

the result of the business. We must look up to this old rope-dancer, at whom you laughed, to know how he will retreat, after the step in advance which he has taken.

Be it as it may, the consequence will be favourable to philosophy past contradiction. On one part, we shall see to what extravagance the system of inspiration can lead men; and, on the other, what the degree of wisdom will be, which the precise and rigorous arguments of philosophy shall produce. Here, the pride and ambition of the priest, who wishes to trample on crowns; there, enlightened reason, which protects and defends the legitimate power of monarchs. On the one hand, the turbulent consequences of an absurd religion; and, on the other, those who rise and exclaim against monstrous abuses. In fine, it will be impossible any longer to maintain a thesis, on a subject which displays its own dangerous folly.

Yet, say you, Marmontel and the Encyclopedists suffer persecution: to which I answer, there are every where factions, cabals, personal enmity, jealousy, and party quarrels; which take arms on the most frivolous pretences, to gratify individual hatred and the desire of vengeance. But, should the most Christian king be excommunicated, he will turn philosopher; you will become

come his first almoner ; Diderot will be confessor to Choiseul, and Marmontel to the Dauphin : all presentations will be yours ; you will bestow an archbishopric on Voltaire, a bishopric on Jean Jacques, and an abbey on D'Argens, and affairs will be but the better conducted.

There has been a great uproar at Ferney, the occasion of which is not known. The patriarch has driven Hagar from his mansion, has taken the sacrament, has caused a certificate of it to be drawn up, and has sent it to Versailles ; a certain sign of some new persecution. But, as all the world knows to what extent he carries the fervor of the faith, he will no doubt escape the calumny of the envious.

I wish to see your health re-established, and your courage as triumphant over artifice as your reason is over error. Remember that Galileo was worse treated than you have been ; that Descartes was banished his country ; that Bayle was obliged to fly ; that Michael Servetus was burnt ; and that the ashes of all those who have in like manner been burnt, in so good a cause, would form mountains as high as Mount Martyr, could they be collected. Farewel. I recommend peace of mind as the first cause of health of body. It is good while philosophising to enlighten others, but we must not forget ourselves ;

selves; watch therefore for your own preservation, in which I more than any one interest myself.

On which I pray God, &c.

L E T T E R XXXII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, June 20, 1768.

I DEMAND pardon of your majesty, and acknowledge your superiority in politics as in every thing else; but I do not perceive all the advantages for unfortunate philosophy which you foresee, in the follies with which it has pleased the Holy Spirit to inspire the Grand Lama. I only expect our sanctified father should receive, from his most dear children, the catholic princes, some kicks in the belly or the breech, as it shall best please your majesty. But I do not hope any philosopher should become either grand almoner or confessor. While waiting for the good which your majesty so kindly predicts, they will continue to be vilified and persecuted. The first they would patiently suffer, might the second only be omitted; and, were but their
enemies

enemies to forbear blows, they would willingly say, like Sofia in *Amphitryon*—

—*Pour des injures,
Dis m'en tant que tu voudras.
Ce sont légères blessures,
Et je ne m'en fache pas*.*

Be this as it may, the eldest son of the church has lately, with all possible respect, seized on Avignon, by sending, not an army, but a detachment from the parliament of Aix, who have taken possession in red robes, and with great politeness. We make war on the Pope with sword in scabbard, and pen in hand; but, in revenge, we are ready to throw philosophers into the fire, on the first given signal.

I most humbly thank your majesty, for the interest you take in my health. The shell of the machine is somewhat better, at this moment; but the mind still remains incapable of application, for want of sleep. I have lately had the affliction to see myself two hundred leagues nearer your majesty, and yet to want strength to go and throw myself at your feet. M. Mettra, who is departed for Berlin, and whom I am not permitted to accompany, because of the regimen to which I am obliged to subject myself, will

* Abuse me as much as you please—words are but wind.

kindly

kindly be the interpreter of my sentiments and regret.

Yes; the patriarch of Ferney has indubitably driven Hagar from his dwelling, and has no society, except the company of a very good-natured Jesuit, who calls himself father Adam, but who, as Voltaire says, is not the first of men. He entertains this Jesuit to say mass, and play at chess. I continually fear lest the priest should play the philosopher a trick, should make a pawn a queen, and at last give him check-mate.

It is said that the bishop of Geneva, or Annecy, one of whose flock he has the honour to be, intended to excommunicate him, for having taken the sacrament at Easter. Fortunately, at the moment when mischief was plotting, Voltaire sent him a fine consecrated loaf; and the priest, for whom there was an excellent cake, pleaded the cause of his parishioner, and maintained that his act of communion was no farce, but that he was in the most holy of all possible tempers. As for him, I imagine he was not so ceremonious, but that he, like Pourceaugnac to his physicians, who insisted on feeling his pulse to know whether he ought to eat, exclaimed—"Why all this reasoning, before
"one takes a morsel?"

I per-

I perceive I abuse the time and kindness of your majesty, by retailing such wretched nonsense. I ask pardon, and intreat you would preserve yourself for the happiness of your subjects, the example of Europe, and the good of philosophy and letters. I hope M. Mettra will bring good news respecting your health, and will bear witness to your majesty of the inviolable attachment, gratitude, admiration, and most profound respect, with which I am, &c.

P. S. I have just read *The Profession of Faith of the Theists*, which seems to me addressed to your majesty. It is an Easter offering from Ferney.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

From the King.

August 4, 1768.

I PERCEIVE your attachment to philosophy is superior to all the temptations of fortune. You will not hire yourself to a court, were it even in quality of casuist, whose office it should be to make algebraic equations of the sins of the sovereign, and the pains and penalties incurred. You prefer your philosophic retreat to the pomp of grandeur, and, more sage
than

than Plato, no Dionysius can induce you to abandon contemplation, and enter the vortex of frivolity. This is the repose which Epicurus so much recommends to his disciples, which is in so little estimation in your country, but which that philosopher considered as the sovereign good. There is a certain marquis, here, powerfully imbued with this doctrine, which he carries so far as not to allow himself to move. Could he live without the circulation of the blood, he would prefer that mode to the one in which he at present exists. For my part, as I live to please every body, I take care to afford him no contradiction. I have even thought, since Jean Jacques has successfully brought paradoxes into fashion, I should not do ill to be of the party of those authors who, embellishing their works by fine phrases, have renounced the foolish frenzy of retaining common sense.

I send you a charming dissertation, which I have written in praise of indolence. You will there find the surface of erudition and that superficial profundity which, in the present age, cannot but secure fame to the work. It has reconciled me to the marquis, and I have no doubt but that your loungers of Paris will think me a deep logician. If you or your friends have any paradox to prove, I will undertake to acquit myself to their satisfaction; being persuaded

this is the only way left to obtain permanent fame.

In the mean time, here follow some subjects to treat on which I have materials ready prepared.—That the society of the Jesuits is useful to states—That philosophers should be banished monarchical governments, after the example of the Roman emperors, by whom astrologers and physicians were expelled Rome—That there are more men of genius, of every kind, in our age than in the past—That superstition enlightens the mind—That the kingdoms in which the subject is the poorest are the most rich; because the vulgar are a prudent race, and have no wants—That poets are poisoners—That contradictory laws are useful to states, because they exercise the sagacity of judges—That frivolity is superior to good sense; because frivolity is light and good sense heavy—That we must act first and reflect afterward; because such is every where the practice.

I should never end, were I to communicate the various themes I have in reserve. Instead of all these fine things, I wish I had the secret to impart strength to your nerves, and to repair the case that contains your soul; that it might live more at its ease, and, disengaged from the

infirmities of matter, might philosophise with greater tranquillity.

On which I pray God, &c.

L E T T E R XXXIV.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, Sept. 16, 1768.

WHATEVER praises your majesty may bestow on indolence, in the charming work you have done me the honour to send me, I intreat you would not believe it is this virtue, since so you are pleased to call it, which prevented me from sooner returning my very humble thanks. A sensation more melancholy, and more profound, occupied my heart, and silenced every other. There have been very disagreeable and serious rumours, concerning the health of your majesty. I impatiently waited to receive certain intelligence from M. Mettra, with which to calm my inquietude. At length he is arrived, has restored me to perfect peace, and enabled me again to assure your majesty of the gratitude, attachment, and respect I feel.

With

With respect to the work in which your majesty praises, with so much wit and pleasantry, that indolence which you practise so little, I have the honour to assure you that indigestion and want of sleep have long persuaded me of the truth of this thesis, and have convinced me that Rousseau was right when he affirmed that —*Reflective man is a depraved animal*. I believe the marquis as well convinced of this axiom as I am; nor can I accuse him of activity, of any kind, except in his inviolable and respectful attachment to your majesty.

We need but cast a look on what is passing in Europe, to perceive that the human species is condemned never to quit its natural indolence, except to the torment of itself and others. Of this I wish no other example than your friend the Grand Turk, who is marching against Russia, for the support no doubt of the catholic religion. Our holy father, the Pope, certainly was in no expectation of such an ally.

I should be very happy to see the subjects which your majesty proposes treated by you; and, among others, the two following—That philosophers should be banished monarchical governments—And, that the kingdoms in which the subject is the poorest are the most rich; because the vulgar are a prudent race, and have no

wants.—This is a truth which men endeavour to prove, by experiment, in most of the kingdoms of the earth. Happy that country which has the good fortune not to be thus far enlightened, concerning its real interest !

Preserve your precious health, fire, for subjects who will never hear such instructions from you ; preserve it for philosophy, for letters, and for the happiness of him who will all his life remain, with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R XXXV.

From the King.

October 4, 1768.

I DID not imagine I should become the chief of a sect, when I sent you that sportive effusion on indolence ; and I plume myself highly indeed, on having philosophers for disciples. Not that I attribute such conversion to the force of my arguments. We must be just, and allow that, after having extended the fancy through every metaphysical research, after having seen the boundaries of all things, or rather those limits which human faculties cannot pass,

we may indulge ourselves in indolence of mind, respecting those secrets of nature which man will never decypher.

It is equally true that human life is a childish game, at which one ragged boy sets up what another has knocked down; or destroys that which others have built; in which some tyros, more restless and ardent than the crowd, disturb the peace of society; and hungry scullions run away with the meat from their comrades, leaving them nothing but the bones. Were such hair-brained gentry born indolent, I do not believe society would suffer any loss.

I do not, however, range the Grand Turk in this division; he has not yet sufficiently learned his catechism, to squabble in behalf of the porter of paradise. He is satisfied with defending his frontiers, against the incursions of the Hungarians; and has sent troops to Montenero, in conjunction with the Venetians, to reduce the rebels to obedience.

The works which you require from me will be in no such haste to appear. I intend that which I call—The Club of Despotism to knock down Reason—for your country. It shall appear at the very moment when I become a candidate for a place in the French academy; and, as it must be orthodox, and speak your language

in all its purity, this book, which will be a proof of my zeal against philosophers, will be a substitute for all which Vaugelas or D'Olivet could teach me.

The book on the utility of poverty, proved by politics and religion, shall appear at Vienna; unless M. Van Swieten should put it in his index *. This work I am convinced will persuade the subjects of her majesty, the empress queen, that the money of the state is only for the sovereign; and that, while the people remain poor, they remain virtuous: witness the Spartans; witness the Romans, during the times of their first consuls; and that, in fine, the rich do not inherit the kingdom of heaven. This paradox, proved, will be equivalent to the family compact formed between the powers of the south. It will be the olive-branch of peace between Prussia and Austria, and I shall be canonized by the farmers of finance.

You will perceive my plans are not confined to trifles, and that my works will be of more value to me than the dictionary of Bayle to his editors. Nay, perhaps I shall rise to the standard of Henry VIII. whose theological olio procured him the inestimable title of Defender of the Faith.

* An index, or list, of books, is kept at Rome, which the people are forbidden to read: perhaps some such index is kept at Vienna. T.

The gout, my travels, and my employments, have somewhat delayed these important labours. My health, in which you so affectionately interest yourself, is at present tolerably restored. Nature has condemned me periodically to collect matter, during three years, which accumulated and brought to maturity produces the gout. It cannot be called ill treatment to be subject only once in three years to a fit of sickness. The patience of kings ought to be exercised as well as that of private persons, for they are moulded of the same clay. We must make ourselves familiar with the idea of dissolution, and prepare to return to the bosom of that nature from which we sprang.

My marquis, to prove he is not indolent, has undertaken a journey to Aix; for you know the people of Provence are like the Jews; the dirt of Jerusalem is to the latter what the mineral waters of Aix are to the former, and seem to them the perfection of the works of the Most High. I have the misfortune not to have the same kind of predilection for the sands of Brandenburg, and believe it possible to be a good patriot without overflowing with prejudices in favour of my own country.

The Swifs have made a drawing of Voltaire doing penance, and going to confession; which is the most pleasant idea the gentlemen of the

thirteen cantons have conceived since the flood. Voltaire is represented with his rosary in his hand, escorted by his game-keepers, and followed by father Adam, his cook, and his coachman. A monkey bears the crucifix before him, and the ass of the maid of Orleans follows after, cocking his tail, under which the pamphlets he is continually printing drop; particularly a short poem against your friends of Geneva. Let us place this among harmless follies, and wish men might never be guilty of any worse.

May you live in peace, entirely recover your health, and remain perfectly persuaded that no person interests himself more than I do in behalf of letters, good sense, and philosophy.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R XXXVI.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, December 19, 1768.

I FEAR lest I should importune your majesty too often, and for that reason dare not make my letters more numerous. I particularly respect the many affairs in which you must be engaged

engaged at this moment, which cannot but be increased by those of the north. Were they not so serious, the latter might for a moment amuse a philosopher. It is curious enough to see the Grand Turk in arms for the support of the catholic religion in Poland, while the catholic princes of the south very civilly curtail the patrimony of St. Peter.

I have no doubt, sire, that the holy father will send the grand vizir a consecrated sword, as he did to marshal Daun. It is said that several of our French, and even the knights of Malta, are going to serve in the Turkish army, against the vile schismatics of Russia. Who then shall hereafter affirm that the spirit of toleration makes no progress, in France?

The king of Denmark, whom we have had here during six weeks, departed eight days ago, wearied and harassed to excess, by feasts at which he was squeezed to death, suppers at which he neither ate nor spoke, and balls at which he danced, yawning till he had set his mouth awry. I have no doubt that, on his arrival at Copenhagen, he will issue an edict to forbid suppers and balls in perpetuity. He visited the academy of sciences, and I pronounced a short discourse on the occasion, which I have the honour to send your majesty. My
associates,

associates, and the public, have appeared to be satisfied with it ; but I require something more ; I wish it should prove worthy of your approbation. I have endeavoured to make philosophy speak with suitable dignity ; and this was the more necessary because the king of Denmark had been assured that philosophers were but bad company. This bad company, sire, is intirely consoled, and highly honoured, by having your majesty at its head.

It is said that the indolent marquis has stopped in Burgundy ; he will, no doubt, make the waters of Aix come to him, till he can determine to go to the waters.

We receive some edifying pamphlets from Geneva. A few days since the A. B. C. was sent us ; which is a succession of dialogues, concerning all which has been, is, and is to come. In the last dialogue, the author suspects there may be a God, and yet that the world may be eternal. He speaks like a man who does not know very well what he is talking of ; and I believe he would willingly say, like the Swiss captain to a deserter who was going to be hanged, and who asked him if there were another world,—“ By heaven, friend, I would “ give a hundred crowns to know.”

But I detain your majesty too long with trifles,
and

and conclude by wishing the next year may be as glorious and fortunate as all your preceding years have been, and by intreating you would continue your kindness to a philosopher whose heart overflows with gratitude, attachment, and the most profound respect for your person. These are the sentiments in which during life, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

From the King.

January 16, 1769.

I SHOULD have answered your letter sooner, had I not been perplexed by affairs of various kinds. I begin by thanking you for your academical oration, included in your letter, and for your complimentary good wishes. I can very sincerely assure you that I am well satisfied with your oration. It is written with great dignity; you praise yet do not flatter the king of Denmark, and exhaust every subject Denmark can afford to say something to its advantage. The style is simple and noble. The

4

only

only simile you have used is applied to the czar Peter I. which is strong, well adapted, and picturesque. I have read other discourses, and even poetry, on the same subject, but, without flattery, I can assure you this of yours is superior to all I have seen on the subject.

We shall have no more news from France of the king of Denmark, he being departed; but there is an article of information from the observatory of Paris, which, if it be confirmed, will afford employment to the learned, and furnish a subject to astrologers. We are told that one of the old satellites of Saturn has disappeared. Let me intreat you, who are an inhabitant of the firmament, to inform me what is become of it. Is it devoured by Saturn? Is it in disgrace? Or is it hid under some cloud, only to laugh at astronomers? The astrologers, without waiting for confirmation of the phenomenon, will boldly announce the fall of the favourite of some great prince; or they will maintain that the reign of Saturn will again recommence, and that he has sent the lost satellite to be incarnated, like Somonocadon, after which it will appear at the head of the Turkish or Russian army, to re-establish his reign.

For my own part, I content myself with continually exclaiming, “If you catch him, good
“gentle-

“ gentlemen, be so civil as not to bring him to
 “ the gallows.”

Your astronomers of Versailles will say that the satellite has descended to earth for the conquest of Corsica, which the generals and armies of Louis XV. are unable to effect. In fine, the result of all these conjectures is that Saturn, during the present year, will afford us sufficient employment.

Old as I am, I have read the A. B. C. of Voltaire, and can answer that he neither knows nor understands the A. B. C. of Hugo Grotius, and that probably he has never read Hobbes; this is pedantic, because it is profound. The judgment he passes on Montesquieu is better than the rest. I am afraid he is in the right. The remainder of the work contains nothing but jokes and pleasantries, scattered according to his manner. He believes the world to be eternal, and alleges the weakest reasons. He wishes to doubt of a God, but is afraid of a faggot. One of his best remarks is that in which he wishes kings, instead of setting their armies to fight, would fight themselves. As Voltaire maintains no army, I have some inclination to send him a well-tempered scymitar, that he may terminate his quarrel with Freron. I should be pleased to see them tilt in a close field, which
 certainly

certainly would be better than abusing each other. For this year past I have received nothing from Voltaire.

The dear Isaac is now dosing himself with the mustard of Dijon, which perhaps is as good as the waters of Aix. I know not when he will return home. Perhaps he will appoint himself historiographer to the satellite of Saturn, that he may write its itinerary, and publish its adventures.

Write to me whenever you have an inclination, but do not think it strange if my answers are not equally prompt. These cursed allies of your Lord's vicegerent* afford us employment. When our neighbour's house is on fire, our first care ought to be to look that the conflagration does not reach our own.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, April 10, 1769.

I IMAGINED I perceived, from the last letter your majesty did me the honour to write to me, that you were at that moment more than

* The pope.

usually

usually busy, and that you had little time to bestow on useless correspondents. This reason, added to my own ill health, occasioned me to forbear importuning you with any of my letters; not to mention that my chief motive for writing is to gain information of your health; and your minister, the baron von Goltz, assures me it is very good. May it so remain, for the happiness of your subjects, and my consolation, while my own is on the decline.

I was much affected by the accident which has happened to the princess of Nassau; as well for herself as from the interest which your majesty takes, in all that concerns her. Happy as you are in success and fame, that is if fame can give happiness, I earnestly wish your majesty might also be happy in your family; but perfect or durable felicity is incompatible with man, and he is the most fortunate who has the least reason to be dissatisfied with life.

The astronomers of the academy must before this have relieved your majesty of your fears, on the pretended derangement of the affairs of Saturn, and the elopement of his satellite. The planets have more prudence than we have, they remain in their proper sphere: men only have the madness to range, and torment themselves, in search of wretchedness.

The

The conflagration has burst out at both ends of Europe, in Corsica and Russia. Heaven grant it may not spread ! Heaven grant it may not extend to France and your majesty's provinces ! I learn from the public papers that the Tartars have already committed great devastations. The misfortunes of men are to me the cause of affliction, however distant the scene of action may be.

The emperor and the cardinals are very busy, at Rome, in appointing the aforesaid Lord's vicegerent, while the Turk is as busy for the defence of the catholic religion in Poland. I know not what pilot they will choose for the bark of St. Peter, but it seems to me to be exceedingly leaky ; and Voltaire appears to be a shark that is making every effort to upset the crazy vessel. It is said, however, that he this year intends to eat his God, as he did last ; but it is also said that his priest will not hear him confess.

We have no work here which can interest your majesty, except the poem of the Seasons, by M. de St. Lambert. I know not what your opinion will be, but, if I do not mistake, you will there find what you love to find in poetry ; harmony, imagery, philosophy, and feeling.

Your majesty is, no doubt, ignorant, for you
have

have not time to read rhapsodies and libels, that there is a gazette published in your states, at Cleves, under the title of *Courier du Bas Rhin*, in which calumnies have been inserted against the most worthy people, and in particular against me. M. de Catt is in the secret of this imposture, and can give an account of it to your majesty.

I am, with the most profound respect, and admiration equal to my gratitude, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

From the King.

April 22, 1769.

DO not imagine, my dear D'Alembert, that the Sarmatians, or the people of the East, disturb my peace so much as to render me unable to answer the letters of philosophers, who maintain peace, in spite of the wars of Poland and Corfica, or of the troubles which you mad Frenchmen excite in Sweden. We have nothing to fear from any power, because we are in friendship with all, and I imagine that the Gallic frontiers of the country of the Celts have

nothing to apprehend from the incursions of the Tartars and Cossacks. Thus our principal wishes are accomplished.

With respect to myself, I shall say to you, my dear D'Alembert, as prince Eugene did to Carelli, physician of Charles VI.—“ My disease “ is a sorry rascal, and is leading me to the “ grave.” It is age gradually mining the constitution, feeding on my vitals, and conducting me to the country in which Achilles and Ther-sites, Virgil and Mævius, Newton and Wiberius are all equals.

I am glad to receive good news from you relative to the affairs of heaven, which are in your department. I wish those of earth and sea proceeded as well ; but, by living in the world, we learn to be satisfied with a little ; and it is some consolation to a man of honour to be informed, when the things of this little earth all are turned topsy-turvy, that those of the milky way are orderly and sane. As to our little heap of mud, you perceive how monarchs wade through it to gain information. You have enjoyed the beatific vision of the king of Denmark, at Paris ; and it is but just that Rome should enjoy that of the emperor, who is something higher in worth than this northern monarch. He is the first emperor, since the age of the lower empire,

empire, whom that capital of the world has received within its walls, unaccompanied by a cavalcade of conquerors. He has given very sage instructions to the cardinals assembled in conclave, which it is to be hoped they will follow. But, apparently, the Holy Ghost is also on his travels, and has passed through Madrid and Versailles, to instruct the electors concerning the choice of the successor of Cephas. It is also very probable a new pontiff will not be allowed to ascend the throne, but on condition of totally suppressing the Jesuits. I, for my own part, glory in preserving their remains in Silesia, and, heretic though I am, in not aggravating their misfortunes. Whoever, hereafter, would see a son of Ignatius, must be obliged to travel to Silesia, the only province in which he will find relics of that order which, not long since, almost despotically governed the courts of Europe.

You will, for a time, be affected by the expulsion of the Jesuits, in France; the education of your youth will, for some years, suffer. The misfortune will be the more sensibly felt, because your literature is on the decline; and, among a hundred that appear, it is much when one good work can be discovered.

I am unacquainted with the poem of St. Lam-

bert which you mention, but I wait for it with that predilection in its favour to which your approbation inclines me.

I have no acquaintance with the gazette of the Lower Rhine, or with that of Holland; and still less with the Paris gazette. I only know that one of your countrymen regularly scribbles two sheets of paper a week, at Cleves, that people buy these sheets, and that a fool of a writer always finds some one more foolish for a reader. But I scarcely can persuade myself that an author of this class can be of any prejudice to your reputation. Alas! my good D'Alembert, were you king of England, your faithful subjects would exercise your patience in a very different manner. Had you read the number of publications which have been vended by your dear countrymen against me, during the war, you would laugh at this wretched newsmonger. I did not condescend to read all the productions of the hatred and envy of my enemies, but recollected the beautiful ode of Horace.—“Un-
“ shaken by the assaults of fortune the sage re-
“ mains: the crush of worlds affects him not.
“ Though to his feet earth should refuse support,
“ he is untroubled; though elements mingle
“ in confusion, he views the wild uproar with a
“ countenance calm and serene. Strong in virtue,
“ nothing

“ nothing can affect, nothing can agitate his
 “ mind. Misfortune and prosperity he con-
 “ templates with the same indifference; laughs
 “ at the clamours of the multitude, at the calum-
 “ nies of the envious, and the persecutions of
 “ his foes; and, seeking refuge in himself, there
 “ finds that sweet serenity which merit and in-
 “ nocence bestow*.”

Such, my good D'Alembert, is the advice which the superannuated poet sends the philosopher. I shall however enquire concerning your complaint, and endeavour to give you satisfaction, which is the least you can expect from me.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R XL.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, June 16, 1769.

YOUR majesty gives me great pleasure, in the last letter you have done me the honour to write, by assuring me that the blows which the

* The royal author has taken such liberties with the Latin, that I have rather thought proper to translate after him than after Horace. T.

Russians and Turks deal to each other will not be retorted, either on the Prussians or the French. I know not, indeed, what your majesty thinks of that learned and famous war, but hitherto it seems to me to resemble the jests of Harlequin and Scapin, who menace each other with great noise, bestow a few strokes with their flat wooden swords, and then run off, each on his proper side. The most pleasant part of the affair is to see the impotent and sublime Porte become the protector of the popery of the Sarmatians. Indeed, no other idea than that of ridicule could be annexed to it, were it not for the effusion of blood.

It is said that the cordelier Pope, Ganganelli, does not intend to give the society of Jesus any sugar-plumbs; but that St. Francis of Assise may chance to put St. Ignatius to death. It seems to me that the holy father, cordelier though he be, will be guilty of great folly, thus to crush his regiment of guards, in compliment to the catholic princes. I cannot but think this treaty resembles that between the wolves and the sheep, the first condition of which was that the latter should give up their dogs. We know the consequence.

It will certainly be very singular, while the most christian, the most catholic, the most apostolic,

apostolic, and the most faithful kings are extirpating the grenadiers of the holy see, to observe your most heretical majesty affording them protection and safety. True it is that, after having resisted a hundred thousand Austrians, a hundred thousand Russians, and a hundred thousand French, you must have become very timid indeed to be afraid of a single hundred of black gowns ; though I own that here, in France, they are more to be dreaded.

Voltaire, who wishes something better than the destruction of the Jesuits, as your majesty well knows, has been so well satisfied with his paschal communion of last year that it is said he was determined this year to take, according to the proverb, a hair of the same dog. He has however a dispute with the bishop of Geneva, formerly a mason as he pretends, and since a *porte-dieu* *, who wishes to have him burnt ; but he tells me he has no vocation to martyrdom, and that he would not expose himself to the fate of the chevalier de la Barre. I answer him, in order to strengthen his faith, that, according to St. Augustin, in his homily on the Decollation of St. John, a man when martyred is most proper for entering into the kingdom of

* A god-carrier ; alluding to the host. T.

heaven ; because the Gospel says we must make ourselves little, in order to enter this kingdom *, which being beheaded naturally produces.

I request your majesty would be persuaded I should not have troubled you with my complaints, relative to the detraction printed against me in your states, had not this detraction been an attack upon my moral character, and had I not known that it had made some impression, even at Berlin. Kings, fire, and especially kings like you, with good reason despise every kind of calumny ; because their actions, being evident to all the world, are able to give calumny the lie : but an obscure individual has no such resource.

Two days since I visited the statuary Coustou, to see the Mars and Venus on which he has been working for your majesty. They are both beautiful ; the Venus is intirely finished, and the Mars will be immediately.

I had the honour to write a few days since to your majesty, and to send you a work on Synonymes, which perhaps you have not yet received, and which the author desired I would present to you.

* The reference I imagine is to the text in St. Luke—
“ He that is least among you all shall be great.” T.

I am

I am informed that M. de la Grange has been ill. Your majesty should command him not to labour too severely. He is a man of very uncommon merit, whose preservation is of importance to the academy, and who is well worthy of your majesty's favour, for his talents, modesty, and the propriety of his conduct. I, by experience, know the effects of long and incessant application; which are a decline of nature and premature old age. May the health of your majesty, like your fame, never suffer decay.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XLI.

From the King.

July 2, 1769.

YOU have your eyes continually fixed, my dear D'Alembert, on the warlike theologians who dispute with ponderous fabres in Poland. None of the hordes that fight under their banners have, I can assure you, read either the Institutions of John Calvin or the Summa of St. Thomas. Heaven is about to decide between the Alcoran and the proceeding of the Holy Spirit
from

from the Father and the Son. I will wager on the sectaries of the latter opinion. What has hitherto passed, between these theological nations, can only be considered as the prelude to what is to happen, when the campaign begins. The grand vizir, at the head of orthodox catholics, is about to pass the Danube. Prince Gallitzin, with his heretics, is advancing to combat them, at the passage of the Neister. They are preparing a fine banquet for Beelzebub; for the Sorbonne and Hell, or Hell and the Sorbonne, deal equal damnation to Mahometans and Greeks. What a fine posse of recruits will there be for his dusky majesty, and his adherents! I have myself sent so many to this country, in my own despite, that I may be allowed to be a spectator of those whom his imperial majesty of Constantinople, and her imperial majesty of all the Russias, expedite on their travels.

You Frenchmen do not proceed in the same manner, in Corsica: you depopulate the island more politely, but the fate of those whom you send into the other world is different, from that of those sent thither by the Russians and Turks; for whoever is killed, while fighting for Paoli and the liberty of his country, is a martyr, and a bird of Paradise. Your Choiseul has snatched

Corfica as a cat claws chesnuts from the fire; and, as he is adroit, he will not burn his fangs. It is affirmed that he has conceived a liking for Avignon, and the district of Venaissin. He protests to the Pope that his kingdom is not of this world; and the poor ultramontane Druid will be obliged to convince himself of the truth of the doctrine, if he can. The Holy Ghost has elected him conditionally. But what would you have him do? He has lost his ideal credit, founded on the general stupidity of nations, and he will suppress the Jesuits, as formerly one of his predecessors abolished the order of the Templars; and the orthodox potentates and the vicar of Bar-Jonas will divide their spoils; while a poor little heretical prince, of a tolerant temper, affords an asylum to the persecuted.

What a picture might an able painter make of all these events! In one group he would depict you the musti, recovering the cathedrals of the Polish bishops; in another Russian popes combating for the sons of Calvin; and, in the back ground, a protestant prince protecting the Jesuits, oppressed by their most catholic and most christian majesties; while St. Ambrose, Luther, and the patriarch Phocyas, peeping out of a cloud, imagining they have weak eyes, are unable to comprehend the meaning of a spectacle

tacle so strange. Were but the picture finished, it ought to be hung up, as an ornament, in every mad-house in Europe.

But, pleasantry apart, the edifice of the Roman church begins to moulder away, and is tottering with age. The wants of princes, who are in debt, make them desirous of the wealth which pious fraud has accumulated, in monasteries. Hungry after this wealth, they think only how to appropriate it to themselves; and this is the whole of their policy. They do not perceive that, while destroying the trumpeters of superstition and fanaticism, they are sapping the foundation of the building; that error will vanish; that zeal will grow lukewarm; and that faith, wanting food, will expire. A monk, contemptible in himself, can enjoy no other respect in the state than that which shall be acquired him by prejudice, in favour of his holy function. He is fed by superstition, honoured by bigotry, and canonised by fanaticism. Those towns in which there are most monasteries always contain most superstition, and intolerance. Destroy these repositories of error, and you will dam up the springs of corruption, which supply prejudice, give credit to mother Goose's tales, and on occasion produce other tales, equally true.

The

The bishops, being most of them despised by the people, have not power enough over them strongly to rouse their passions; and the priests, who are very exact collectors of their tithes, are sufficiently peaceful, and good citizens, not to trouble the order of society.

The consequence of all this is that sovereigns, very affectionately attached to that accessory (wealth) which excites their cupidity, know not whither their own proceedings lead them. They think they act like politicians, while they are acting like philosophers. Voltaire, it must be owned, has greatly contributed to smooth their road. He has been the precursor of the revolution; and, by preparing the minds of men, that is, by pouring an inundation of ridicule on the cuculati, and on something better still, he has chipped away the rough marble, from the block on which these ministers are at work, and which will, they know not how, be shaped into a beautiful statue of Urania.

After deeds so worthy, I am a little vexed to see Voltaire keep Easter with such folly, and afford the public such a farce. Well; let him print his confession of faith, to which no one gives credence! Let him sully the masculine robe of philosophy, by these trappings of hypocrisy, in which he muffles himself!—He writes

no more to me. He will never pardon me, for having been the friend of Maupertuis; this is an irremissible crime. It is said he has quarrelled with his bishop; that the latter has complained to the court, and that the most christian king has given sentence against Voltaire; that fear has seized on the poor philosopher, and that he has yielded to the mummeries of Easter and the altar, lest the powers whose patience he has not a little abused should no longer have forbearance.

That man would have had too many advantages, over his contemporaries, had it not been for the leaven of his foibles. His hatred resembles that of the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob; and he would punish, even to the fourth generation, men like Desfontaines, Rousseau, Freron, Pompignan, &c. This is neither in the taste of the academy nor of the portico; for you philosophers,

Calmly enthron'd on Newton's conquer'd orbs,
Deaf to the clamours of the croaking foe,
Him in his mire, with just disdain, ye leave;
And thus the futile slander turn to praise.

Such ought to be the practice of all those who know how to despise ridiculous accusations. For who will believe, on the word of a newsmonger of the Lower Rhine, that an academician of
eighty

eighty has been killed by contradiction, and irony. This is a kind of death hitherto unknown, and so shall remain. Artful detraction is dangerous; but such nonsense as this certainly never can draw down any thing but contempt.

Our geometrician of Berlin is in excellent health, and rather lives in the planet Venus than on this terraqueous globe. The people, who have heard speak of Venus and her passage over the sun's disk, have been two nights on the watch, to observe the phenomenon. You will laugh at the expence of my good countrymen; but this is all the wit they have.

You tell me of works which you have sent, but which have not yet arrived. I know the *Synonymes François*, and have long had the work. It is a useful book, for it teaches us how to estimate exactly the terms of your language; and I suspect it is a new edition of this work which is on the road for me.

I own I am sufficiently disgusted with the new works which at present appear in France; they are so superabundant, so full of paradoxes, of loose and inconsistent reasonings, and, in addition to these defects, have so little genius that they might inspire contempt for a love for letters, had not the preceding age furnished us with master-pieces of every kind. The happy fecundity of that age rewards us for the barrenness of the

the

the present. I was born at the end of that epocha, in which the human mind burst out in all its splendor. The great men who were the glory of those happy times are now no more; and France has no one on whom she can at present rely, like stately and strong columns to support the falling edifice, except on you and Voltaire. I therefore hope we shall leave this world together, and travel in company toward that country of which no geographer has yet given us a map, no traveller a description, nor any quarter-master has pointed out the road, but which we shall be obliged to find as well as we can. Till the moment of departure, however, may you enjoy perfect health, with all the happiness our human condition will admit of, and preserve your mind in unshaken tranquillity! Such are the prayers of all philosophers, for their dear Athenagoras.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R XLII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, August 7, 1769.

THANKS to your majesty, I am perfectly tranquil, relative to the two only countries
ON

on earth for which I interest myself ; that which has the happiness to have you for a sovereign, and that which I have the honour to inhabit. After such an assurance, let Roman catholics, called Mahometans, and Schismatics, who pretend they are for toleration, murder each other at their pleasure. I shall be satisfied with repeating the *de profundis*, for the repose of their souls, without disturbing myself concerning the success of their arms, or those grand events which I believe never will be the result. Should the Alcoran be victorious, we have then only to believe in the animal Borak.

I know not whether the Corsicans, whom we have expedited into the other world, are more at their ease there than they were here ; but it seems to me that Sertorius Paoli has brought the business to but a foolish kind of conclusion. He is accused of being *somewhat* of a poltroon, which has *somewhat* appeared in his conduct ; and this, it must be owned, is a defect *somewhat* essential, in the chief of a nation that wishes to be free.

It is affirmed they are often obliged to pull the cordelier Pope by the sleeve, to induce him to abolish the Jesuits. Nor do I much wonder at this : to propose, to the Pope, the destruction of these brave warriors is equal to proposing, to

your majesty, to disband your guards. Not but I imagine men are much surpris'd, in Spain, Portugal, and at Naples, to see the successor of St. Peter and your majesty contending, who shall protect the sons of Ignatius. This seems a fact as astonishing, in these enlightened countries, as the adventure of the two missals, which were formerly thrown into the fire, to know which was the best, and which both were burnt, to the great disappointment of the gaping spectators. It may, however, for a moment, divert your majesty to be told that the general of the Jesuits, in a petition presented to the late Pope, did me the honour to cite me, as an authority which could not be suspected, in favour of his order; because I had somewhere said that the Jesuits are the Janissaries of the holy see, and like them necessary to the support of the empire.

I know not on what terms Voltaire will be with God's new earthly vicegerent. It is said he was seriously threatened with excommunication, by his predecessor. He informs me he has great fear of dying *a martyr*, which was the reason he *confessed*, and that, at the worst, he might be but *a confessor*. He has lately written a small pamphlet, intitled PERPETUAL PEACE, which is a violent declaration of war; or rather a continuation of war against those whom you

wot of. He says that his bishop of Annecy, who calls himself prince of Geneva, is a cousin-german of his stone-mason; and that the mortar of the prelate is not adhesive.

It appears as impossible to me as to your majesty to imagine that an old man of eighty should die of vexation, or apoplexy, because he had been called a dotard; but I will venture to assure your majesty that the people of Berlin have been kind enough to believe this: nor indeed am I astonished at it, after what your majesty has told me, of their sitting up two nights to see Venus pass the sun.

Fortunately, sire, your academy of sciences does not resemble the remainder of the nation. Its memoirs form an excellent work, and prove it to be one of the most learned and select societies in Europe. I do not speak of M. de la Grange alone, whose merit is so well known to your majesty; but, among others, of Messieurs Lambert and Beguelin, who have both inserted excellent papers in the collection, and who appear to me worthy of the favours with which your majesty has ever honoured merit.

Your majesty has appointed me a rendezvous in the valley of Jehosaphat; and, according to all appearance, I shall be there first. I know not from whom the Holy Ghost proceeds, but

should be very glad to know from whom proceed the two true deities of this world, Digestion and Sleep. I would travel in search of them, be they where they would.

I intreat your majesty to accept my most humble congratulations, on the marriage of the prince of Prussia. I flatter myself you are perfectly persuaded of the lively interest I take, in whatever concerns your illustrious house, and august person.

In these sentiments, and with the most profound respect, I shall all my life remain, &c.

L E T T E R XLIII.

From the King.

September 14, 1769.

I PROFIT by the departure of the sieur Grimm to send you this letter, and to inform you that hitherto neither fortune, chance, nor providence has determined which of the belligerent powers shall be victorious. Monsieur St. Nicholas, swimming upon his mill-stone, and whose understanding is held in good repute,

pute, has persuaded prince Gallitzin to retreat to Kamienieck.

I am glad that you are satisfied with the memoirs of our academy. The three persons of whom you speak are, past dispute, the three most worthy members of the body. Men of talents, of every class, are very uncommon. It is very difficult to find men equal to our wishes, in these times of sterility. A more select assembly would be difficult to procure.

If you will not give me the meeting at the valley of Jehosaphat, determine to meet me here. There is no intermediate choice : and I, for my part, should be much better pleased to see you clad in flesh and blood than in I know not what disguise, and in the guise of a ghost ; for, without tongue and without voice, I cannot suspect that our conversation would be exceedingly witty, or instructive. I have charged M. Grimm to inform you of the interest I take in your welfare ; nor can you be unacquainted with the esteem with which I am, &c.

L E T T E R XLIV.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, October 16, 1769.

M. GRIMM, who has only been returned a few days to France, has delivered the letter with which your majesty has been pleased to honour me, and for which I intreat you to accept my humble thanks. He is returned, sire, with a heart penetrated with that respect, admiration, and attachment, with which your majesty inspires all those who have the honour to approach your person. But what most interests me, for, like Bartholomew, I proceed immediately to essentials*, M. Grimm has given me the most satisfactory information concerning your majesty's health, and gaiety; for gaiety is one of the most convincing proofs of good health.

The three persons whom your majesty does me the honour to mention, Messieurs de la Grange, Beguelin, and Lambert, are in effect the best members of the academy; and most

* *Car je ressemble à Bartholomée, qui allait droit au solide, &c.*
I do not know, or cannot recollect, to what M. D'Alembert alludes; perhaps to some character in comedy, or farce, who minded the main chance, T.

worthy,

worthy, for this reason, of your majesty's favours. I hope young M. Bernouilli will follow their example. I have lately received a dissertation from M. Cochius, which obtained the prize on metaphysics. It appears to be well written, and full of sound philosophy. If M. Cochius be not a member of the academy, it seems to me he is worthy of a place in the class of speculative philosophy, or in that of the belles lettres.

It has been asserted, sire, nor have I any difficulty in believing the assertion, that the emperor is returned to Vienna, delighted by your majesty. In all his travels, he has certainly seen nothing of equal worth. Since this monarch has formed an acquaintance with your majesty, I am convinced he will never make war on you; and this is the subject which occupies me most; for the tranquillity and safety of your majesty are still more dear to me than your fame, which has itself lost nothing, by your admirable conduct, during six years peace. On these conditions, I leave the Turks and the Russians to massacre each other, when and how they please.

My health is continually fluctuating; I wish at least it would permit me to acquire sufficient strength once more to throw myself at your majesty's feet; for this same valley of Jehosaphat is but a gloomy kind of rendezvous: but let

me meet your majesty in what valley I may, you will ever find my heart full of that gratitude, profound respect, and admiration with which I am, &c.

L E T T E R XLV.

From the King.

November 15, 1769.

I AM glad I became acquainted with the sieur Grimm; he is a man of wit, has a philosophic head, and his memory is well stored and embellished. He never can enough repeat how much I esteem you, and how highly I interest myself in all that relates to you. He found me in tolerable good health, because the period of convalescence, after a fit of the gout, is exactly that in which the health is most vigorous. Beside that the best remedy, for youth and age, is indisputably peace of mind; which, inspiring mild cheerfulness, infuses new balm into the blood, and appeases those violent agitations which are destructive of our weak fibres.

I imagine the good cordelier Pope will have need to recur to this remedy; at least his pretty children

children are cutting him out plenty of work. I would rather be a Cobler than a Pope in the present age. The charm is broken, and the wretched quack continues to vaunt his drugs, which no one comes to buy; while his daring auditors are attempting to overturn his stage. I know not what Englishman it was who, after having drawn the horoscope of hierarchy, and calculated its duration, fixed its death at the end of the present century. I should not be sorry to be a spectator of this event, though it does not seem to me quite so near: I rather think its present absurdities will endure two ages longer; being, as they are, supported by popular fanaticism.

From what I have said, the question may be started whether the religion of the vulgar must not be intermingled with fable. I think it must; because those animals which the school has deigned to name rational have, in effect, very little rationality. What are a few enlightened professors, or sage academicians, compared to the immense multitude of which a great monarchy is composed? The voice of these preceptors of the human race is feeble, and cannot be heard beyond a certain small extent. How may all the prejudices that are imbibed with our mother's milk be eradicated? Who shall
wrestle

wrestle with custom, which is the reason of fools; or stifle in the heart of man those seeds of superstition which nature has sown there, and which are nurtured by the perception of their own weakness? All this induces me to believe there is no improvement to be made, in this fine species of unfeathered bipeds. The herd of mankind will probably ever remain the sport of those knaves whose endeavours are to deceive.

Our academy, though not splendid, makes a silent progress. The approbation you bestow on some of its members renders them more dear to me, and the hope you give me of making a tour into these countries inspires greater pleasure than the Jews will receive, at the second apparition of Elias. On this anchor at present I rest; for I neither know any map in which to find the valley of Jehosaphat, the road that leads thither, nor the language of the country. There will be much more certainty in an earthly interview, at which I can with my combined senses assure you, face to face, of the esteem, &c.

L E T T E R XLVI.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, December 1st, 1769.

I IMAGINE your majesty is much occupied, at the present moment, by that violent fermentation with which the north of Europe is agitated. I continually fear to importune you, by useless letters; but I cannot deny myself the satisfaction of testifying the pleasure I feel, at the birth of a new prince to your august and illustrious house. I hope that her royal highness, the princess of Prussia, will again give occasion to similar rejoicings.

Some time ago, I had the honour to thank your majesty, by a letter at least long enough, for the information you had pleased to afford me. If I might venture to take the liberty, I should ask what the present war portends; and what will be the fate of Poland, the sovereign of which appears to me to be the Holy Ghost of kings. Voltaire does not seem vexed at the ill success of the Turks, who he affirms neither convert nor persecute, but brutalize. For my own part, when, as it often happens, I find my head but ill upon my shoulders, I think on the poor
Grand

Grand Vizir, who has lately been decapitated, and own mine is a more favourable destiny, bad as it is; especially when I compare it, fire, to the fate of yours, which singly is burthened with so many affairs, and which yet finds time to cultivate philosophy and poetry, with the greatest success. These you have reconciled; may you, in like manner, reconcile St. Nicholas and the afs Borak; which I cannot but think, especially in the last affair, little better than a beast*, I am, &c.

L E T T E R XLVII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, December 18, 1769.

IT is not long since I had the honour to write to your majesty, and I continually make a scruple of obtruding too often with my letters; persuaded, as I well may be, that your time may be better employed than in their perusal. I cannot however avoid returning my most

* *Une bête*—Blockhead, fool, idiot, afs, &c.—This is one of the most teasing, because one of the most common, puns in the French language, to a translator. T.

humble

humble thanks, for the prologue which you have had the goodness to send me. The princess, who is the subject of this poem, appears to me to be praised with equal gallantry and art. I know that she merits these praises, because your majesty has done me the honour several times to inform me of her great musical talents. I know too, sire, were the word princess changed to that of king, to whom these eulogiums might be still better applied; not omitting to add others, if possible more meritorious, because relative to objects greater, and more essential to the happiness of mankind. The conclusion of the prologue, sire, is a new pleasantry, and in an excellent taste. *Avancez mes bastards** made me laugh heartily. Alas! Melpomene and Thalia have little else than bastards; for even our comedians of Paris are not too legitimate.

I humbly thank your majesty for the news you send me of your health. I receive particular pleasure, from that tranquillity of mind you seem at present to enjoy; for this, sire, assures me of the happiness of your majesty, in which I interest myself first, and most. It next informs me of the happiness of your subjects, and perhaps of the pacific disposition of the other

* Advance my bastards.

powers of Europe. I know not whether the old falve-seller, formerly a cordelier, be equally tranquil, relative to the fate of his crazy bark : I think however it will continue on float longer than while he lives. I own his drugs do not sell as they did formerly, but they are most respectfully swallowed still ; I will not say merely by the vulgar, but by people of more elevated rank ; and purchased by others, who indeed do not swallow them, but who dare not throw them in the fire.

The question whether the religion of the vulgar must not be intermingled with fable merits, fire, to be proposed by an academy like that of Berlin. For my own part, I think truth should always be taught mankind, and that there can be no real advantage in deceit. The academy of Berlin, by proposing such a question, as a prize question in metaphysics, would, if I do not mistake, do itself much honour, and distinguish itself from other literary societies, in which too many prejudices are still found.

Permit me, on this occasion, to assure your majesty of the intire gratitude of Messieurs de la Grange, Lambert, and Beguelin ; who seem to be deeply affected by your majesty's bounties, and very ardent to merit them, more and more effectually.

I con-

I conclude by intreating your majesty to receive, with your usual goodness, my hearty wishes for your welfare, at the beginning of the coming year, which is the thirtieth of your glorious reign. May thirty more succeed, and may fate add to your illustrious life those days which she seems determined to retrench from mine!

I am, with the most profound respect, most tender gratitude, and most lively admiration, &c.

LETTER XLVIII.

From the King.

January 4, 1770.

THE north, Protagoras, is more peaceable than you suppose. While disquietude and confusion reign in the east, we who are called the Elders of Europe want alacrity to cal, like a certain people of the south, who are sometimes known by the name of Gauls. These insinuating good folks show their noses every where, often where they have no business, and bear that restlessness with which they are themselves tormented over all quarters of the globe. They imagine that, by communicating it, they will

6 diminish

diminish the portion which has fallen to their share, and that they will themselves become more serene. But this it is affirmed is lost labour, and to become more tranquil themselves (I dare not venture to say more sage) they must exorcise the demon by which they are possessed; for so I have lately been assured they are, by a very grave divine, with whom I converse on my own salvation. I leave the Holy Ghost as you have coupled him, with the king of the Sarmatians, and who never were so coupled before by any council : notwithstanding the ill credit in which they at present are, their turn may come; and, if fate shall please, they may recover favour and make their fortune. This comrade of the king is still young; he is like the duke de Laurangais, by the commission of folly he may become wise. His birth has not been proved above fifteen hundred years; so that you perceive he is still in his infancy. God knows how many millions of years have passed away before his old papa brought himself into credit, and enjoyed that respect in which he is at present held. Time is omnipotent; he produces, destroys, abases, and elevates gods and men. Let us confide in him, my dear D'Alembert, and our knight-errant will in turn find an opportunity, to display his abilities.

In

In the interim, my family amuse themselves with manufacturing children. This is a good remedy against indolence, and which ought to be applied, after a seven years war. I thank you for the part you take in these matters; and, were this the age of Catherine de Medicis, I would entreat you to draw the horoscope of an embryo which may happen to come into the world six months hence; but, as it is not, I excuse you.

For my part, instead of children, I make bad memoirs, for the academy; a specimen of which you here see. I imagine you will be partly of my opinion, respecting the principle I have pursued. My ideas, I believe, are calculated to promote the good of humanity; but I have been obliged to spare, in order that they may be adopted by, the clergy. If good be but promoted, it matters little by what means. I am a great partisan for morality, because I know men, and perceive the good of which it may be productive. An algebraist, who lives locked up in his cabinet, sees nothing but numbers, and proportions, which produce no effect in the moral world. The progress of manners is of more worth to society than all the calculations of Newton.

I hope you will freely tell me your opinion,
VOL. XI. L respect-

respecting my memoir; and that you remain perfectly convinced of my esteem.

On which I pray God to take you into his holy keeping.

L E T T E R XLIX.

From the King.

January 8, 1770.

YOU know that we poets are accused of indulging a little too much in flattery, and hyperbole: of these however the prologue, written for the electress of Saxony, is not susceptible; because this princess is endowed with uncommon qualities, and possessed of talents sufficient for the fame of an individual. As the public however is rather prone to malice than admiration, it was necessary to give this malice food, by a little gentle discipline bestowed upon the players, who certainly merit castigation. I imagine you find it difficult to obtain good actors, at Paris; but, had you seen those who represented this piece, your company in comparison would have appeared divine.

If, as philosophers say, all the occupations of men are but the sports of boys, it is better to
write

write a bad prologue than to disturb the peace of Europe. I have no quarrel, either with Mahomet or the Sarmatians, who are worrying each other. I live in peace and good intelligence with all my neighbours, and write ballads for my own amusement.

I know not what THE INFALLIBLE seated on the seven hills may think, but I know that he interests himself in finishing and improving our catholic church of Berlin ; and that he does not hate me, regarding me as one of the props of his pretorian band, which others would oblige him to dismiss. He satisfies himself with disputing, inch by inch, the remainder of an ideal credit, which makes him apprehensive of approaching bankruptcy. He finds himself in the same situation as your comptroller of the finances ; but I will wager that France, the most ancient kingdom on earth, will plead her right of precedency to become bankrupt ; and that your purses will be emptied before the reign of superstition shall be abolished.

The question you propose to our academy appertains to profound philosophy. You wish us to scrutinise the nature and constitution of the human mind ; and to decide whether man be susceptible of rather confiding in his reason than in his imagination. From the little knowledge I

possess, I should incline toward imagination; for the marvellous always seduces, and man is rather a reasoner than reasonable. I rely on the experience of all ages. You can find no people whose religion had not a mixture of absurd fable and morality, necessary for the support of society. Egyptians, Jews, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, each made fable the basis of their religion. You find the same marvellous system established among the African nations; and if you do not meet with the like phrenzy in the Ladrone islands, it is because the inhabitants had no religion whatever. The Chinese, past dispute, are the people who seem least addicted to superstition; but, though the great follow the doctrines of Confucius, the people do not seem to imitate them; they receive their bonzes with open arms, who feed them with imposture; a food proper for the multitude, and adapted to its gross appetite.

The proofs I have alleged are taken from such examples as history affords; and there are others, which I think more cogent, that arise from the condition of man, and that impediment which daily and necessary labour is to the progress of such knowledge as should render the bulk of mankind superior to the prejudices of education. Let us suppose a monarchy which
contains

contains ten millions of people ; from these ten millions let us first deduct husbandmen, manufacturers, artists, and soldiers ; and the remainder will be about fifty thousand persons, of the two sexes. From this fifty thousand let us subtract twenty-five thousand females ; and the residue will be composed of the nobility, and higher order of citizens. Among these let us examine how many there are who are indolent, incapable, pusillanimous, and debauched ; and the result of the calculation will nearly be that, among what is called a civilised nation, consisting of about ten millions of inhabitants, you will scarcely find a thousand literati. And how great will be the difference of genius among this thousand ! But, be it supposed possible that a thousand philosophers should be of one opinion, and not themselves subject to any prejudices : what effects would their lessons produce on the public ? If eight tenths of the nation are employed in obtaining food, and do not read ; if another tenth be triflingly indolent, debauched, or incapable ; the result is, that the little good sense our species can possess must be engrossed by a small part of the nation ; that the remainder are not susceptible of this good sense ; and that, consequently, the marvellous will always prevail with the multitude.

These considerations led me to believe that credulity, superstition, and the scrupulous fears of timid minds will ever preponderate, in the public scale ; that the number of philosophers will be small, in all ages, and that bigotry, of some kind, will continually lord it over the earth. The christian religion was a species of theism, at its commencement. It soon granted an act of naturalization to pagan idols, and ceremonies ; and, by new embroidery, so entirely covered the simple robe it received at its first institution, that it could no longer be known for the same. Imperfection, moral and physical, is the characteristic of the globe we inhabit. All attempts to enlighten it end but in loss of time, and are often dangerous to those who are thus active. We must be satisfied with being individually wise, if so we can be, and abandon the vulgar to error, endeavouring only to prevent those crimes which are destructive of the order of society. It was well said, by Fontenelle, that, if he had his hand full of truths, he would not open it, to scatter them among the public ; for the public was not worth the trouble. I think nearly the same ; still wishing well to the philosopher Diagoras, and praying God to take him into his holy keeping.

L E T T E R L.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, January 29, 1770.

THE letter your majesty did me the honour to write, dated the 4th instant, and the memoir that came with it, did not arrive till the 27th of the present month. I know not how this packet happened to be so long on the road, and I only take the liberty to explain myself thus, that your majesty may not suspect me of negligence. I have not lost a moment, but immediately read your excellent memoir. I can with truth assure your majesty that I am entirely of your opinion, with respect to the principles which should serve as the basis of morality. If your majesty will be pleased to cast your eye over my elements of philosophy, in the 4th volume of my miscellanies, pages 72 and 92, you will there perceive that I indicate *the intimate connection between our true interest and the fulfilling of our duty*, as the source of morality and happiness: and that I regard *enlightened self-love as the principle of all moral sacrifice (or abstinence)*. I own, sire, that I did little more than point out these truths, which your majesty has so well explained in your work, with philosophy the most eloquent, and the most wholesome.

One sole point has continually embarrassed me, in my efforts to render this moral principle absolutely, and without restriction, universal. This is to know whether those who reserve nothing, who give all to society and to whom society refuses all, who scarcely can by their labour feed a numerous family, or who even are unable to procure food, if such men I say can have any other principle of morality than law; and how it would be possible to persuade them that it is their true interest to be virtuous, when it shall happen that they may be the contrary with impunity. Could I but have found a satisfactory solution of this problem, I should long since have published my moral catechism.

I wish I were able to answer your majesty more at length; but, for these three weeks, I have frequently been troubled by a vertigo, which occasions such a debility of mind as to interdict all application, and scarcely to permit me to hold a pen. Your majesty makes excellent memoirs, and your august family charming children. For my part I can neither make the one nor the other, thanks to the ruinous state of my poor machine. But there is one of my faculties, fire, which will never grow more feeble; and this is the lively gratitude, &c.

L E T T E R L I.

From the King.

February 17, 1770.

THE approbation you bestow on my memoir incites the greater pleasure in me, because your suffrage is of more weight than the applause of ten thousand of the ignorant. To answer the objection you have started, relative to those who bend under the extreme of wretchedness, it must first be allowed that the laws, and the charity of the well-disposed, come to the succour of the unfortunate; and that, public calamities excepted, there is no example of any family, not even of a single man, who has absolutely died of hunger. Those men who have been most ill-treated, by fortune, are such as depend entirely on their labour. When sickness comes, they are reduced to want, because their revenue ceases with their work. After recovering, they find themselves in debt, and too weak to apply themselves to their daily occupations. This is no doubt a severe trial, especially when burthened by a family; but, instead of robbing or murdering on the high road, which actions lead to the gallows or the rack, would they not do better to have recourse to the compassion

compassion of the virtuous, that they might with propriety find relief, instead of plunging themselves into wretchedness a hundred times more dreadful? The principles I propose, by which vice should be suppressed, are self-preservation, which should lead men to avoid actions by which the loss of life may be incurred; an attention to reputation, which should prevent them from blindly yielding to any disgraceful passion; and the love of honourable fame, that powerful motive, which induces all those who are thus actuated to abhor whatever may injure their renown, and impels them to the practice of the sublimest virtue. If we do but properly apply this panacea to the various diseases of the mind, we certainly shall perform astonishing cures.

You will perceive, in all this reasoning, I take it for granted that I address myself to a nation under the dominion of the laws; for it is very certain, without the repressive principle of punishment, the force of reasoning would be insufficient, singly to impede the ferocious sallies of disorderly self-love.

I shall add nothing more at present, as well to spare your health as for want of matter, praying God, &c.

LETTER LII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, March 9, 1773.

I AM gratefully penetrated by the goodness with which your majesty deigns to interrupt your important affairs, a moment to employ yourself with the metaphysical reveries of a poor valetudinarian. The answer you have been pleased to give, to the moral impediment which I took the liberty to state, when speaking of your excellent memoir, has certainly all the solidity of which the subject is capable. I allow that the fear of the laws and death, on the one part, and on the other the hope of relief from the virtuous, may be a curb capable of retaining those who live in indigence. But I suppose, which is possible, that the indigent person should first be deprived of all hope of succour; and again that he should be well assured of his power to conceal the theft he may commit, on the superfluities of the rich, to provide for his own subsistence; and I ask what he ought to do in this case; and whether he would be able, or whether he ought, to suffer himself and his family to perish with hunger? The same difficulty does not occur, with one who has pos-
sessions

essions of any kind : he ought not to steal, even secretly, because it is his interest that his property should not be stolen.

I entreat your majesty's permission to make a few reflections on another question, which I have before had the honour to mention, and which procured me so excellent and so philosophic a letter : that is to say—*Whether, on religious subjects or on any other, it be proper to deceive the people ?*

I agree with your majesty that superstition is the food of the multitude ; but I think the multitude would not swallow this food, except when it can procure no better. Superstition, inculcated and taking root during youth, will no doubt cede to reason, when reason presents itself. Reason may come too late, when the place is taken : still, let the ignorant multitude, even for the first time, contemplate reason and good sense on one side, and absurdity on the other, does your majesty imagine reason would not have the preference ? Nay, I will say more : reason, even though it come too late, need but persevere to triumph. I do not think, like Fontenelle, we should keep the hand closed, when we are certain it contains truth : we ought only to open it with precaution, one finger after the other ; and, when the hand shall be wholly open, truth
will

will be wholly known. The philosophers who open it too suddenly are madmen, and their only recompense is the loss of their hand; but those who keep it absolutely shut do not perform their duty, toward mankind.

Your majesty's occupations will not longer permit you to listen to my declamation; and the feebleness of my own head, vacant and stupefied as it continues to be, would prevent me, were I bold enough, further to pursue such reflections. May the fates long preserve that understanding which your majesty received from nature, and which is much more essential than mine to the good of mankind, and of philosophy!

I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R LIII.

From the King.

April 3d, 1770.

I WISH your health were better and more vigorous, that you might lengthen your letters; for while we dispute we obtain knowledge, and you might afford me information. Might ridicule be indulged, I should soon overthrow the difficulty which you have started, by answering that it

ought not to have been started by a Frenchman, who in his own nation beholds the great thieves honoured, and the small hanged. You see all France overrun by farmers-general, receivers, treasurers, &c; whose trade it is individually to rob your king, and his kingdom. But I abandon such a defence, which is unworthy the gravity and importance of the subject; and, assuming the serious tone and physiognomy of a pedagogue, I shall answer my dear D'Alembert that the thing you suppose scarcely can happen, because all hearts are not equally hard; and there are compassionate people in all societies, who listen to the cries of wretchedness. Should there miraculously chance to be a family destitute of all aid, and in the miserable state you have described, I should not hesitate to declare that theft, in such a case, would be right. 1. Because this family has been refused all succour, instead of receiving any. 2. Because for a man to suffer himself, his wife, and his children, to perish is a greater crime than to rob another, of what he does not want. 3. Because the intention of the theft is virtuous, and the act originates in indispensable necessity. I am even well persuaded that there is no court of justice which would not acquit such a theft; the veracity of the fact being first well proved. The bonds of society
are

are formed by reciprocal service; but, if any society be composed of persons destitute of pity, the bonds then are broken, and the members recur to the state of pure nature, in which every thing is decided by superiority of strength.

This is the answer which a child in philosophy sends to the great Anaxagoras, who amuses himself with such prattle.

You next propose, in a few words, a question to which I cannot reply, except according to the noble Teutonic custom, by a volume in folio. Do you not perceive, my dear Anaxagoras, the discussion into which I cannot but enter, if I would perfectly explain such a subject? But, in order to satisfy you, I will be as concise as possible.

Were this the first day of the world, and were you to ask—*Is it proper to deceive the people?* I should answer no; because, error and superstition being unknown, should not be propagated; they should rather be stifled. From historical retrospect, I discover two species of impostors; the one to whom superstition has been made the ladder of fortune; and the other such as have, by the aid of some prejudices, moulded the minds of the people to their own advantage. Among the first species of impostors are the Bonzes, Zoroaster, Numa, Mahomet, &c; and these

these I totally abandon to your mercy. The latter are politicians, who for the better government of mankind have had recourse to the marvellous, in order to lead and render men docile. Among these I enumerate the Augurs, whose aid was so often useful at Rome, to prevent or calm popular seditions, which the enterprising Tribunes endeavoured to excite. I know not how to condemn Scipio Africanus for his intercourse with the nymph, by which he acquired the confidence of his troops, and was able to execute acts so great. I do not blame Marius for his old woman; nor Sertorius for being followed by a hind. All those who have to manage a multitude of men, who are to correspond to one end, will sometimes be obliged to have recourse to delusion; nor do I think them to be condemned, if they impose on the public for reasons such as I have alleged.

It is different with gross superstition, which is one of the drugs that nature has dispersed over the universe, and which even partakes of the character of man. I am persuaded that, were a colony of incredulous persons established, after a certain number of years superstitions would spring up. The marvellous seems made for the mob. One ridiculous religion is abolished, and another more ridiculous introduced. There
are

are revolutions in the opinions of men, but still bigotry succeeds to bigotry. I think it very good and useful to enlighten mankind. To combat fanaticism is to disarm the most cruel, the most sanguinary of monsters. To exclaim against monkish abuses, and against vows, which contradict the intentions of nature and prevent population, is certainly to serve mankind: but I think it would be impolitic, and even dangerous, to suppress those ailments of superstition which are publicly distributed to children, and whom it is the will of their fathers thus to have fed.

The reformation, as you know, effected great changes. But how many wars, how much blind carnage and devastation have been the consequence of daring to reject some articles of faith! What would be the fury of mankind, were all these articles to be suppressed? A nation without error, prejudice, superstition, and fanaticism, would no doubt be a very fine sight; but it is said, in the centuries of Nostradamus, that no such shall be found, till one be first discovered without vice, passion, and crime.

You philosophers, who are the lights of this dark world, let some flashes of reason escape. And what is the consequence? A few men of letters own reason is on your side; but the

Bonzes and Lamas exclaim, and an infinite number of fools hermetically close the crevices of their caves, to prevent your light from dazzling them and the inhabitants of their dens, and the world remains blind.

Philosophy, encouraged in the present age, is announced with more fortitude than ever. Yet what progress has it made? You will answer, the Jesuits are expelled. Granted: but, if you please, I will prove that vanity, secret revenge, cabal, and interest have accomplished the deed. In return, I will remind you of the legal murder of Calas; the persecution of Sirven; the cruel transaction at Amiens; the canonization of * * *; the witches that are publicly burnt at Rome; the ridiculous quarrels of the Swiss, on the subject of eternal torments; the theological fury of the priests of Holland, against those professors who taught that virtue was sufficient for mankind; and the species of religious war which at present rages in Poland. Ah! my dear Anaxagoras, man is an incorrigible animal, and rather sensitive than rational. However, I have drawn up a catechism for him, which I send you.

My feet are as ill as your stomach. I have the gout, or I should have answered you with more order; for my head is affected; and you know

know perhaps that we had a physician here, who when the head was diseased prescribed bleeding in the great toe. I therefore find it difficult to say whether my disease exists in the head or the feet: but, be it where it will, it will not prevent me from respecting and esteeming you.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R LIV.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, April 21, 1770.

OF all the letters which your majesty has done me the honour to write to me, I never was more strongly and tenderly affected, than by that which I have just received, dated the 3d of the present month. Its arrival was necessary, to calm the violent inquietude I had for some days felt, concerning your majesty's health, and the afflicting rumours which were current. My fears are now removed; and, though your majesty is not freed from the gout, I perceive at least you are not in danger.

A treatise has lately appeared on the gout, by

M 2

a phy-

a physician of Angers, named Paulmier, which is said to be excellent. The remedy he proposes is the application of leeches. I know several persons at Paris who, since the book has appeared, have used this remedy, and who at least have found great ease. M. Mettra will immediately send it to your majesty.

I am, at this moment, too much occupied by the health of your majesty, to speak of my own. My head continues in the same state: the very first moment it will permit me so to do, I will answer your majesty circumstantially, relative to the different articles of the excellent and philosophic letter I have just received, and also to your moral catechism. I entreat your majesty's permission to forget every thing, at the present, except your personal safety, so precious not only to your people, and to philosophy, but to Europe, and mankind.

I am, with the most profound, and permit me to add, the most tender respect, &c.

LET-

LETTER LV.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, April 30, 1770.

I PROFIT, not by a lucid interval, for it is long since I have had any, but by a moment in which the clouds are somewhat dispersed from my brain, to do myself the honour of circumstantially answering the philosophic letter which your majesty was kind enough to write, in reply to the queries I took the liberty to propose.

I think like your majesty, on the first subject; and congratulate myself that I am of your opinion: not from any principle of adulation, of which I am incapable, but because the reasons alleged by your majesty, in support of your answer, appear to me valid, and had previously occurred to my mind. I am of your majesty's opinion that theft is allowable and even just in a case of such absolute necessity as has been supposed. We will not enquire whether this absolute necessity be merely a phantom, as your majesty seems to imagine. I will not say, though I suspect, it is not; for I have often seen people so unfortunate, so destitute of succour, after having vainly knocked at a thousand doors; that I

know not which they ought to have done, to have knocked at the next, or to have procured subsistence at the expence of the wealthy, if so they could have done with safety to themselves.

True it is, sire, that such doctrine, no matter how rational, would not be proper to insert in a treatise, or moral catechism, because of the abuse that might be made of it, by indolence or cupidity. Such an inconvenience impedes the writing of a complete course of morals, for the use of all orders of society. I know not even whether, at least in France, the laws would not condemn, no doubt with much regret, any unfortunate person under the circumstances supposed. They would be obliged to commit injustice, lest other men, not equally wretched, should abuse the precedent. If I do not mistake, the distribution of wealth in society is unequal, to monstrous excess. It is as atrocious as absurd to see some wallowing in superfluity, and others in want of food. But, in great monarchies especially, the evil cannot be remedied; and victims are sometimes necessarily sacrificed, though innocent, to prevent the poor members of society arming against the rich, as they might be tempted, and perhaps would have a right to do.

With respect to the second question—*Is it proper to deceive the people?* I do not hesitate to think

think like your majesty that, when error and superstition have no existence in a nation, their birth should be opposed by all possible means: and I farther believe with you that, if they have obtained power, they must not be violently attacked; because impetuous zeal can only tend to load philosophy with ineffectual guilt. I imagine that, instead of force, we ought to employ art, and patience; ought to make indirect attacks on error, without appearing to think on the subject; and to establish the opposite truths, on solid foundations; careful not to make an application of them, to persons or things. We must not point the cannon against the house, because the inhabitants who defend it skirmish from the windows with their small arms; but rather build another house, by its side, more habitable and commodious. People will insensibly come and live in the latter, and the house that served as a den to wild beasts will be deserted.

The moral catechism, which your majesty has done me the honour to send me, appears to me very proper for the young nobility, for whose use it is destined. The moral motives which are proposed, to render them virtuous, are in fact the true, and the most proper to make an impression principally upon that class

which, enjoying the chief advantages of society, is more than any other interested in observing the laws, both written and traditional.

I am with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R LVI.

From the King.

May 17, 1770.

I AM greatly obliged to you, for the concern you take in my health. The necessary chain of causes would have it that the acrid humours, collected in the vessels, should be productive of the gout, under which my sufferings have been great. But I yield to the irrevocable decrees of nature. I had recourse to regimen, and patience, and am recovered.

During my convalescence, the first book which fell into my hands was “An Essay on Prejudices.” It drew me from that inert state to which I had been reduced, by my lost powers; and as, on many subjects, my thoughts are in the inverse ratio of the self-appointed philosopher, who is the author of the book, I employed all the energy I possessed to discover his errors. I felt repulsive emotions to the sentiments of the
author,

author, who pretends that truth, being made for man, should at all times be spoken. Whenever the author has fallen foul upon kings, generals, and poets, his ideas have not accorded with mine; because I have the honour to be a tolerably bad poet (or public poisoner) because I have had the honour occasionally to fight, in quality of a general (or mercenary executioner) and because I have the honour to be a kind of king (or barbarous tyrant).

These considerations, assimilated to my manner of thinking and according to the idea I have formed of things, have determined me to defend my comrades, and to prevent such abuse, often repeated by such authors, from obtaining, by habit, and this frequent repetition in the public ear, the sanction of received and indubitable opinions. My author tells me that my kingly comrades are a kind of fools, who can neither read nor write. I have read like a Benedictine, and have scribbled as much paper as the most hungry daily news-writers; it is therefore for me to plead their cause. I send my brief to Anaxagoras, who shall be our judge; and even, should he think proper, he may present the work to the court, assured by this means of obtaining the first place in the academy of sciences.

Pleasantry

Pleasantry apart, the work is very licentious, and very indecent. It may be said that the author, like a mad dog, attacks every body, and rushes upon passengers, perfectly satisfied if he can but bite. He certainly merits similar treatment. If truth be made for man, which I do not grant, truth must be spoken to him, on all occasions. I conform to his own precepts, and have told him very sincerely what I think of his work. He will find in me an obedient disciple, who, when enlightened by his truth, makes it a duty to follow his example : and, since truth is always useful to man, I flatter myself he will approve the freedom with which I have spoken this truth.

But what is the end which this said philosopher proposes by his work ? Is it to change the religion of Europe ? I have demonstrated the thing to be impossible. Is it to reform government ? Ill language does not carry conviction ; it rather tends to irritate. Is it to inflame the imagination of the hot-headed, who by declaiming against government gain imprisonment in the Bastille ? This would be the purpose of a malevolent, a perverse, a vicious being ; and such ought not to be the character of the author. Does he wish to become the martyr of natural religion ? Such would be the attempt of a mad-

man; for he who has no hopes beyond the grave ought to render his present existence as happy as possible, that being the only one he can enjoy. The author's want of art is peculiarly apparent, in his calumnies against the Christian religion. To impute crimes to it is the act of a novice. The gospel tells us, we should do unto others as we would they should do unto us; and this precept is the essence of all morality. It is therefore ridiculous, and outrageous exaggeration, to affirm that this religion is only productive of rascals. We ought not to confound the law and the abuse of the law. The law may be good, the abuse pernicious; and an author who discovers so much animosity, against those whom he attacks, discredits himself, and loses the confidence of the reader.

Such are the thoughts of a lover of solitary wisdom, secluded in his small vineyard, in which he meditates, like others, on the follies of men; and especially on the strange and ridiculous opinions, which have entered their imaginations. There does he offer up his prayers to Nature, that the necessary chain of causes may long maintain your organised being free from infirmity, suffering, and dissolution.

On which I pray, &c,

L E T T E R LVII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, June, 8, 1770.

IN the state of weakness, and almost of imbecility, to which it has pleased Nature to reduce me, it is at least some consolation for me to learn that your majesty is cured of your disease, and that you are kind enough to take part in my afflictions. The work you have deigned to send me is the worthy and fortunate produce of your convalescence: but I am unacquainted with the *Essay on Prejudices*, which your majesty has taken the trouble to refute. I know however that the book has made its appearance at Paris, and that it even sells there at a high price. But it is sufficient for a book to treat on certain subjects, and properly or improperly to attack certain people, to make it sought for with avidity, and give it more consequence than it merits; because of the precautions which government takes, to prevent the circulation of such kind of works: precautions that often confer an honour on the author which he himself does not merit. With respect to myself, I have seen so many books and pamphlets against what Voltaire calls * * * that I have long forborne to
read

read any more ; and I am sometimes tempted to say, of the title of philosopher, as Jack Roast-beef does of that of Monsieur (Esquire) in the comedy of *Le Francois à Londres* *, “ I wo’nt be “ so call’d ; there are too many rascals who assume that title.”

The criticism which your majesty has written, on the Essay on Prejudices, gives me still less desire to read this than other rhapsodies of the same kind. We may say of all our scribblers, against superstition and despotism, what the Jesuit father De la Rue said of his fellow Jesuit Le Tellier—“ He drives us so fast that he will over- “ turn us.”—Philosophy should not amuse itself with abusing the clergy ; as your majesty has observed, it should endeavour to render religion useful, by making it conducive to the happiness of the people ; and it should teach sovereigns their true interests, and subjects their duty, that it might render authority more mild, and obedience more exact.

It is great folly to accuse philosophers, at least those who merit the name, of preaching the doctrine of levellers. Such equality is an impossible chimæra, in all states whatever. The true equality between citizens consists in rendering them all equally subject to the laws, and equally pu-

* The Frenchman in London, by De Boissy. T.
nishable

nishable when the laws are infringed. Such is the practice in all well-governed kingdoms, in which the superior never has the power to oppress his inferior with impunity. But unfortunately all kingdoms are not so governed. Of this the author perhaps has been a witness; and it may be this which has so violently heated his gall, against those who govern. I have been a spectator, like himself, of nearly the same things; but I have beheld them with more phlegm, and have concluded that those who govern and those who are governed are often equally reprehensible; and that each class of the human species has no just reproaches to make to the other.

I say for example that, if kings have often undertaken unjust wars, republics as your majesty well observes have as often done the same; and in particular I regard the Roman republic, which is so much celebrated, as one of the greatest scourges that have ever afflicted humanity. To this reflection I shall add nothing, except that I have admired the moderation with which your majesty has expressed yourself, concerning the war of 1756. All you have said on this subject, on that of the necessity of wars, and on that of taxation, appears to me full of good sense and reason: but there is a want of a fund of equity, for the application of these principles;
and

and of such a fund as, unfortunately, men in power do not always possess.

I should say more on the subject, were the limits of a letter sufficient for the nice details of which it is susceptible: as they are not, I shall be satisfied with praying the Holy Ghost to enlighten kings and nations; and especially long to preserve your majesty, for the example of the one and the happiness of the other.

I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R LVIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, July 6, 1770.

I VENTURE to hope your majesty will pardon the liberty I take, and that respectful confidence your goodness has inspired, which encourages me to request a new favour.

A considerable society of philosophers and men of letters, of whose number I am one, have determined, sire, to erect a statue to M. de Voltaire; as the person to whom, of all our writers, philosophy and letters are most indebted.

Philosophers and men of letters, of all nations,

tions, and particularly of the French nation, have long regarded you, sire, as their chief, and their model. How flattering, therefore, and how honourable will it be to us, on the present occasion, if your majesty will be pleased to permit your august and respectable name to stand at the head of ours! It will bestow on M. de Voltaire, whose works you value so highly, a most precious and public mark of esteem, by which he will be infinitely affected, and which will render the remainder of his life dear to his recollection. It will add greatly to the fame of this celebrated author, and to that of French literature, the gratitude of which will be eternal.

Permit me, sire, to add that, in the feeble state to which my labours have reduced me, and which no longer permit me to bestow any thing but good wishes on letters, the new mark of distinction which I have dared to ask, in their favour, will to me be the sweetest consolation. It will, if possible, increase the admiration I feel for your person, the profound sentiment which I shall during life preserve of your bounty, and the tender veneration with which I shall, to my last sigh, remain, &c.

LETTER LIX.

From the King.

July 7, 1770.

I AM very sorry to hear you are still in so languid a state. The summer season is generally a restorative to bodies, and imparts those powers which they had been deprived of, by the diseases of winter. I hoped the same benefit would have accrued to you in the spring; and I imagine that the bad weather which has happened this year, at that season, is the cause that you are not better. I think that some mineral waters, or baths, may entirely restore you; but of this the faculty must decide.

Scarcely had I sent you my remarks, on that Essay on Prejudices, before another book fell into my hands; and, as I was in the train of examining philosophical works, and of writing, I committed my observations to paper, and send them to you. The book I mean is the *Système de la Nature*; and my endeavour has been to refute the most palpable contradictions, and the false reasonings, which appear to me most striking. Many things remain to be said on the subject; and there are various details into which

I have not time to enter. I have chiefly confined myself to the four principal points, on which the author treats.

As to the first, in which he pretends that blind unintelligent nature, by the aid of motion, is all-productive, I believe it will be impossible for him to maintain any such opinion, in contradiction to the objections I have made. With respect to the second, which relates to the doctrine of necessity, further answers might be given; for, in my opinion, of all metaphysical questions, that is the most difficult to resolve. I propose to temporise, which is an idea that has seduced me, and which perhaps may be very true. I take the mid-way between freedom and necessity. I set great limits to the freedom of man, but still I leave him that part which the common experience of human actions would not allow me to refuse. The two remaining questions relate to religion and government.

There are beside an infinite number of passages in the work, concerning which the author is liable to attack. He affirms, dogmatically enough, that the sum total of good is greater than the sum total of evil. My opinion and his on this subject differ; and it would be impossible for him to prove his proposition, were it disputed with some warmth. In fine, collecting my

my remarks, I supposed myself a doctor of the Sorbonne, a pillar of the church; St. Augustin; but, after reading what I had thrown upon paper, I found myself exceedingly heterodox, and discovered my propositions to be offensive, heretical, and worthy the thunder of the Vatican. My consolation however is that, if I am liable to be well cooked in the other world, my adversary shall at least be doubly parboiled, fried, and roasted.

I cannot comprehend how authors can be found thoughtless enough to publish such works, which expose them to real misfortunes. Should the writer of the System of Nature, by any accident, be discovered in France, the least that could happen to him would be to pass the remainder of his life in the Bastille; and that for having enjoyed the pleasure of speaking all he thought. We ought to be satisfied with thinking for ourselves, and should give a free course to vulgar opinions. I cannot imagine what can have raised the indignation of the author against the government of France. Many things may pass in that kingdom, of which, because of the distance at which I live, I may be uninformed. I am persuaded acts of violence and injustice are committed, which ought to fall under the chastisement of government; but let it be well re-

membered that, when four or six thousand, or in fine, when a multitude of men have agreed to deceive one man, such things infallibly happen. They happen in all countries, and all ages, and will always do the same; unless the human species should be melted down, by some able chemist, and philosophers should intermingle some other substance in the composition.

We should be first certain that the man is guilty, and accusation should then follow; but the accuser is often too precipitate. It is good that men should have some archetype, some model of perfection, in view; because they depart from such model but too much, and the idea is even effaced from the mind. Still however they will never arrive at perfection; for, unfortunately, it is incompatible with our nature. To this assertion I continually recur, my dear D'Alembert; and thence conclude that those who sincerely labour for the good of society act like your defunct abbé de St. Pierre, and dream like honest men. This opinion does not prevent me from labouring, in that small sphere in which chance has placed me, to render those who inhabit it happy, and the experience of affairs which daily pass through my hands informs me what are the difficulties. Believe me, my friend, the man who could teach you to digest

digest well would be more useful to the world than the philosopher, who should banish all prejudices. I wish you such a physician, most sincerely; for no person is more interested in your preservation, nor esteems you more than he who—

Prays God to take you into his holy keeping.

L E T T E R L X.

From the King.

July 28, 1770.

THE finest monument to Voltaire is that which Voltaire has erected to himself; his works; which will subsist longer than the basilick of St. Peter, the Louvre, and all the buildings which human vanity has dedicated to eternity. When French shall no longer be spoken, Voltaire shall be translated into the language that shall succeed the French.

Full however of the pleasure which his various productions have afforded me, each so perfect in its kind, I cannot, without being ungrateful, refuse agreeing to the proposal you make me, and contributing to the monument which

public gratitude shall erect. You have but to inform me of what is required of me : I shall refuse nothing in behalf of this statue, which will do more honour to the men of letters, who erect it, than it will to Voltaire. It will be said that, in this eighteenth century, during which so many men of letters dishonoured each other by their quarrels, others were found sufficiently noble and generous to render justice to a man, endowed with talents and genius superior to all ages; it will be added we deserved to possess Voltaire, and the most distant posterity will envy us this advantage. To distinguish celebrated men, to render justice to merit, and to encourage talents and virtue, are the sole rewards that can be bestowed on genius ; rewards due to all that cultivate letters with superior success. The pleasures of the mind are more durable than those of the body, and literature softens the most ferocious manners, imparts a charm to the life of man, and renders existence supportable and death less terrible.

Continue therefore to protect and to celebrate those who apply themselves to letters ; and who in France have the good fortune to succeed. This, gentlemen, will be the greatest honour you can do your nation ; and will obtain pardon, in future ages, for some Gaul-like and savage acts,

acts, which might otherwise be remembered, to the disadvantage of your country.

Adieu, my dear D'Alembert: continue in good health, till a statue shall, in turn, be erected to your memory.

On which I pray, &c.

LETTER LXI.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, August 2, 1770.

THOUGH the feeble state of my mind continue the same, and will not suffer me to examine those abstract questions into which your majesty enters, with such facility and depth, I still cannot longer defer returning my most humble thanks, for the essay you have done me the honour to send me, on the *Système de la Nature*; nor to communicate those observations to which that excellent work gave birth, in my mind: observations which I submit to the judgment of your majesty, and which will much rather tend to confirm than combat your majesty's opinions.

Nothing can be more sage, in my apprehen-

sion, nothing more true, than the reflections with which your majesty begins, relative to the incertitude of metaphysical knowledge. The motto of Montaigne—*What know I?*—seems to be the answer which should be made to every question of this kind; and in particular with respect to the existence of the Supreme Intelligence. I think that those who deny such existence affirm much more than they are able to prove; and that no rational opinions can be entertained on the subject, those of scepticism excepted.

It cannot be denied, no doubt, that in the universe, and in particular in the formation of animals and plants, there is a combination of parts, which seems to declare an Intelligent Combiner. They prove his existence, like as a watch proves the existence of a watchmaker. This appears to be incontestable. But what answer shall be given, when we would proceed, and enquire what this Intelligence is; when we ask has it created, or does it only model, matter? Is creation possible? And, if it be not, is matter therefore eternal? If matter be eternal, and has only need of mind for the modelling of it, is that mind a part of, or is it distinct from, matter? How can we conceive an *immaterial* being, acting upon matter? Add to which, if
this

this Intelligence be infinitely wise and infinitely powerful, how does this unfortunate world, which is his work, happen to be so full of physical imperfections, and moral horrors? Why are not men just and happy?

Your majesty replies that the eternity of the world is a solution of the difficulty; and, in my opinion, a solution no doubt it is: but in this sense, and this only, that, the world being eternal and consequently a thing of necessity, whatever is cannot be otherwise. And thus we plunge into the system of absolute necessity, which but ill agrees with the idea of an omniscient and omnipotent God. When all these questions, Sir, are asked, I cannot but think we should a hundred times repeat—“*What know I?*” But we ought at the same time to console ourselves, for ignorance, by recollecting that, since we are unable to know more, it is a proof that no more knowledge is necessary for us.

Nothing, Sir, can be more just, or more philosophic, than the definition your majesty has given of freedom: and it seems to me that, if men would be at the trouble of understanding each other, they would avoid many disputes, on this subject. Man is free, thus. In actions which are not mechanical, he determines for himself,

himself, without constraint : but, on the contrary, although he determine voluntarily and by choice, there is always something which induces him to determine, and which makes the balance incline to the side he takes.

I farther agree with your majesty that the philosopher who believes in necessity, and makes that doctrine the basis of his work, ought to regard criminal persons as unfortunate, and more worthy of compassion than hatred. But I do not think that, in a system in which men are machines, subjected to the laws of fate, chastisement on one part and the study of morality on the other are useless to such a society : for, even in the man-machine, fear and interest are the two great regulators, the two principal wheels which contribute to the action of the machine ; and, of these two regulators, the first is put in motion by the punishment inflicted on the guilty, and which serves to curb those who are likewise inclined to guilt ; and the second by morality, well understood, the study of which convinces us that our first interest is to be virtuous and just ; as your majesty has so well proved, in your excellent tract on this subject.

I shall readily agree with your majesty concerning the christian religion, the morality of which is no doubt excellent, and to which it
should

should have been confined; but its dogmas, and intolerant principles, have been exceedingly injurious to the morality with which they are amalgamated. I repeat, its intolerant principles; because it appears to me an inevitable consequence of a religion which pretends to be exclusive, like the christian religion, and to teach the sole manner in which the Deity can be worshipped, that it should establish itself by all possible means; even by employing violence, when force and violence are in its power. This is the reason that the christian religion has shed such rivers of blood; nor can I avoid regarding it, in this respect, as one of the greatest plagues that ever afflicted humanity.

I shall only speak a word on government, here. I think that the form of government is a thing indifferent, provided the government itself be just; that citizens of all ranks equally claim its protection; that they equally submit to its laws; are equally punished, when those are violated; and that punishment be not reserved for petty guilt, and honours for the great.

What relates to Louis XIV. would give birth to much discussion, were we to enquire whether he did good or harm to his kingdom; and whether likewise he were not the scourge of Europe,

Europe, by setting an example to other princes of those numerous armies which the most sage are at present obliged to maintain, the individuals of which would certainly more willingly employ themselves in trade and agriculture, were they not under the wretched necessity of remaining in their present state.

I am well persuaded your majesty will be of my opinion, and am, &c.

L E T T E R LXII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, August 12, 1770.

I DID not lose a moment to inform M. de Voltaire of the signal honour your majesty is pleased to confer on him; and, in his person, on the literature and the nation of France. I have no doubt he will himself testify, to your majesty, the warmth and duration of his gratitude. But where shall I find words to express mine? What language will convey my feelings, at reading the great, the noble eulogium, which your majesty has bestowed on philosophy, and philosophers? I took the liberty, and I dare

hope your majesty will not be angry with me, to impart the contents of your letter, to all those who were worthy of being auditors: nor can I possibly repeat to your majesty how much they admired, and how respectfully they revered, the union of so much justice, goodness, and glory! You, sire, are the chief and the model, of all who think and write. You are at present (I will employ your majesty's own words) their avenging and their rewarding deity. For the recompense bestowed on genius is the punishment of those by whom genius is persecuted. Would that your majesty's letter were to be engraved on the pedestal of the statue! It would be more flattering to M. de Voltaire, and to literature, than the statue itself.

As to myself, to whom, sire, you have been pleased to speak also of a statue, I have not the impertinent vanity to imagine I merit any such monument. I only request a stone may be laid over my grave, with these words—THE GREAT FREDERIC BESTOWED ON HIM HIS FAVOURS, AND HIS BENEFITS.

Your majesty asks what we desire of you for this monument.—A crown piece, sire, and your name.—The latter your majesty has been pleased to grant, in a worthy and generous manner. Marshal de Richelieu has given twenty guineas.

guineas. We are in no want of subscriptions, but without yours they will be ineffectual; and, whatever it shall please your majesty to give, we shall with gratitude receive.

Permit me to take this opportunity of thanking your majesty, for the favour you have granted M. Cochiuſ, by appointing him a member of the academy, and allowing him a penſion. His reſpect and attachment for your perſon, his merit and his want of fortune, render him worthy of your majesty's bounty.

I will at the ſame time venture once more to recommend to this bounty M. Beguelin, who, in the memoirs of the academy, has juſt publiſhed ſome excellent enquiries concerning achromatic teleſcopes, well calculated to render them more perfect. Beſide the eſteem in which I hold his talents, I am gratefully indebted to him for ſome excellent remarks, which he has made on one of my eſſays, relative to the ſame ſubject.

I am, with the moſt profound reſpect, the liveliest gratitude, &c.

P. S. The French academy have unanimouſly voted that the letter, with which your majesty has been pleaſed to honour me, ſhall be inſerted in their regiſters; as a monument honourable to

M. de

M. de Voltaire, and to letters; and have charged me, fire, to lay their humble gratitude, and profound respect, at your majesty's feet.

L E T T E R LXIII.

From the King.

August 18, 1770.

I THINK your physicians a very amiable body, and should be very glad if mine resembled them; but, in this country, they prescribe nothing to their patients better than drops, and most abominable drugs. Not but your physicians have been mistaken. Had I been at Paris, in a wig sufficiently large and powdered, and you had consulted me, I should have prescribed the air of Prussia, as the most proper for your cure. But, as I am no doctor, I am obliged to have faith in those who are privileged to laugh at, or to abuse, their patients.

I am departing for Silesia, and Moravia. At my return, the sum you demand shall be paid at Paris. It is a kind of consolation to me that these so much vilified kings may be of some utility

utility to philosophers. They are at least good for something.

Farewel, dear D'Alembert. I will tell you more on my return.

LETTER LXIV.

From the King.

September 26, 1770.

I Certainly did not expect that my Teutonic letter should be read by the French academy, in full assembly. The abbé D'Olivet would have espied more than one solecism; but, fortunately for the author of the letter, the abbé D'Olivet had bidden this world adieu, before it was written. I pardon your having shewn it, because it contains some truths, which are as proper to be heard as to be spoken. Talents no doubt ought to be distinguished, especially when they rise to supereminence. Great minds labour only for fame, and it would be treating them severely to let them always hope for, yet never enjoy, the thing of which they are in search. The penalties annexed to all ranks of mankind can only be softened by this balm, a
little

little of which is necessary, even to the greatest men.

I imagine that, at present, you are on your road for Italy ; and I have just ended a long and fatiguing journey, which I have dispatched with tolerable speed. I mean to take a little rest, after which I intend to answer your very philosophic letter, which I have just received ; and the rather because one of your doctors has informed us that the greatest affront the theologian can sustain is to have nothing to reply. Something therefore must be said ; and I have fortunately found, in my warehouse, a collection of distinctions, and subtleties, sufficient for an answer and its duplicate ; after which, an it please Heaven, we will neither of us understand the other ; and from that moment the dispute will become interesting. I am very much of your opinion that, after having long discussed these abstruse subjects, we shall be obliged to recur to the "*What know I*" of Montaigne.

Your comptroller of finances has assured me that he has provided for the expences of your journey, as well as for the bust of Voltaire. Mettra will pay two hundred crowns for that purpose ; so that the scull and the brain may certainly be mine, and the remainder I leave to the other subscribers.

Adieu, my dear Anaxagoras. May you return safe and sound to Paris, and may your physician next year prescribe the air of Berlin!

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R L X V.

From the King.

October 18, 1770.

MY journey into Moravia, the camps assembled in those environs, and the visit I have received from the electress of Saxony, are sufficient excuses for not having answered you, on subjects which neither you nor I shall ever well understand.* I have since given some rest to my mind, that it might collect itself, after the dissipation of the great world, and recover its philosophic tone.

You oblige me to tilt with you in the dark, and to exclaim—"Great Jove! Afford us but "light, and be thou our opponent*."

But, since the labyrinth must be entered, nothing but the clue of reason can be my guide. This reason, shewing me the astonishing relations that exist between the works of nature,

* See note, vol. vi. p. 239.

and

and making me observe final causes so striking and so evident, obliges me to allow that an Intelligent Being presides over the universe, to maintain the general arrangement of the machine. I represent this intelligence to myself, as the principle of life and motion.

The system of a chaos reduced to order appears to me false; for more power would be requisite for the reduction and support of this chaos, than for the arrangement of things, as they at present exist.

The system of a world created out of nothing is contradictory, consequently absurd. Nothing therefore remains but the eternity of the earth, an idea which, as it implies no contradiction, appears to me the most probable; because what is to day may have been yesterday, and so forth. Since man is a material, thinking, and moving being, I can see no reason why a similar, thinking, and active principle may not be annexed to matter, universally. I do not call this principle spirit, because I can form no idea of a being which does not occupy space, and which consequently does not exist. But, as thought is the result of the organization of the body of man, why may not the world, infinitely more organized than man, possess an intelligence infinitely superior to that of so frail a creature?

This intelligence, co-eternal with the world, cannot, according to my conception, change the nature of things. It cannot render that which is heavy light; it cannot make frost and fire the same. Subjected to laws which are invariable, it can but combine, and employ matter according as its intrinsic constitution is inclined. The elements, for example, have certain principles, and can only exist such as they are.

If it should hence be inferred that the world, being eternal, exists of necessity, and that consequently all existing things are subjected to the same necessity, I think I ought not to subscribe to that proposition. It appears to me that Nature has confined herself to the endowment of the elements with stable and eternal properties, and with subjecting motion to permanent laws, which no doubt considerably influence, without being entirely destructive of freedom. The organization and the passions of men originate in the elements of which they are composed. As often as they obey these passions, they are slaves; but free as often as they resist.

Here you will attack me, and say—Do you not perceive that the reason with which they resist their passions is subjected to that necessity which occasions this reason to act upon them? Rigorously speaking, this may be true; but he
who

who chooses, and decides, between reason and passion, seems to me to be free; or I know not what idea to annex to the word freedom. Whatever is necessary is absolute; therefore, if man be rigorously subjected to necessity, no punishment or reward can shake or destroy this transcendent conqueror: but, as experience proves the contrary, it must be allowed that man sometimes enjoys freedom, though often limited. If you require me, my dear Diagoras, more circumstantially to explain what this intelligence is, which I have married to matter, I must beg you to grant me a dispensation. I have a glimpse of such an intelligence, as of an object confusedly seen in a fog. To divine it is much; but to be acquainted with and to define it is not given to man. I am like Columbus, who suspected the existence of a new world, but who left to others the glory of the discovery*.

After a confession so sincere, you will not tell me that childish prejudices have induced me to embrace the defence of the christian religion, against a fanatic philosopher, who attacks it with so much animosity. Permit me to say that our sects, at present, as little resemble the religion

* The king seems strangely to have forgotten himself; unless he alludes to America being called after Amerigo Vespucci. T.

of Christ as they do that of the Iroquois. Jesus was a Jew, and Christians burn the Jews. Jesus preached patience, and Christians persecute. Jesus taught good morality, which Christians do not practise. Jesus established no dogmatical opinions, and Christian councils have provided good store. In fine, the Christians of the third century bore no resemblance to the Christians of the first. Jesus was an Essenian, and had imbibed the morality of the Essenians, which greatly resembled that of Zeno. His religion was pure deism; how it has been embroiled by us you well know.

These things being so, by defending the morality of Christ I do but defend that of all philosophers. With respect to the opinions which are not those of Christ, them I give up to your discretion. Priests having remarked the power their ideal credit acquired them, over the minds of the vulgar, made religion subservient to ambition. But, though their politics have disfigured what in its institution was not amiss, this proves nothing more than that the Christian religion has undergone the fate of all sublunary things; it has been perverted.

When therefore we would exclaim against this religion, we ought to indicate the age of which we speak; and to distinguish between its abuses and its institution. But, be its doctrines
what

what they may, the vulgar are attached to them from habit. The same may be said of certain exterior practices : whoever attacks them, without mercy, excites the vulgar indignation.

What then can be done ?—Preserve morality ; reform that which needs reformation ; instruct men in power, who influence government ; overwhelm superstition with ridicule ; laugh at absurd opinions ; stifle bigotry, that the minds of men may be led to universal toleration. The religion of a nation would then be of small importance.

After having said what I do and what I do not know, concerning God, I will detain you a moment, on the subject of one of his earthly images, Louis XIV. who was too much praised during his life, and after death too bitterly criticised.

You accuse this monarch of having been the first to give the example of those numerous armies which are at present maintained. Do you not recollect that this custom, long before his time, had been introduced by the Romans ? Suppose yourself in his place. He foresaw that the jealousy of his neighbours would continually incite wars against him, and he did not wish to be taken unprovided. He perceived the royal house of Spain on the eve of becoming extinct ; and was it not his duty to prepare that he might

profit by such favourable circumstances, if opportunity should offer? Was it not in fact a proof of his forethought and wisdom, to be thus previously provided? And, after all, great armies do not depopulate countries, nor deprive industry of its arms. There can only be a certain number of husbandmen, in any country, in proportion to the lands they have to cultivate; and a certain number of artificers, in proportion to the extent of their trade. The surplus will become beggars, or thieves.

Beside, numerous armies occasion a circulation of money, through the provinces, with equal distribution; by which means the subsidies, furnished to government, are returned to the pockets of the people. The expensive support of armies shortens the duration of wars. Instead of thirty years, which something above a century ago they continued, monarchs, being exhausted, are obliged to terminate them sooner. In our times, seven or eight campaigns, at the furthest, empty the treasuries of kings and render them pacific and tractable.

We must farther observe that, by such large armies, conditions * are more definitively fixed than

* The conditions of peace, I should have imagined to be the meaning of his majesty; because the phrase *les conditions* would scarcely have been employed by a Frenchman, to signify

than they formerly were. Neither the labourer, the manufacturer, the lawyer, nor the man of learning, leave their employment, at present, at the sound of the trumpet, but tranquilly continue their usual occupations, leaving the revenge of their country to its defenders. Formerly troops were hastily raised on the first alarm; each man became a soldier. Nothing was thought of but how to repulse the foe. The fields remained fallow, trade became stagnant, and soldiers were ill paid, ill provided, and ill disciplined: they existed only by rapine, acting like banditti, in the unfortunate countries which became the seat of their depredations. All this is changed. Not that there are not vile pilferers, in some armies; but such excesses bear no comparison to those which formerly existed. For these reasons, you will permit me to suspend my judgment, concerning the maintenance of great armies, till you shall furnish me with better arguments for their abolishment. Politics no doubt proceed on rules different from those of metaphysics; though there are

nify the various occupations of men: *états* is the word generally used to express this idea. The following sentence however seems to denote, though not with certainty, that the ranks of mankind, and not political treaties, is the true signification. T.

some

some as strictly demonstrated as any of the theorems of geometry.

All this, my dear Diagoras, does not diminish my esteem for you. Though we differ in opinion, we need not hate, and especially not persecute. I have refuted the author of the *Système de la Nature*, because I was not convinced by his reasoning. If however men were to attempt to burn him, I would carry water to extinguish the fire. Such ought to be our thoughts, when we interfere with philosophic subjects, or we must renounce the title of philosopher.

Take notice that, if we farther continue our disputes, concerning God and necessity, we shall have the misfortune, no longer to understand each other. I can only repeat such remarks as my own observation and probability have furnished. These are to us only subjects of amusement, and vain curiosity; they fortunately have no influence on our peace of mind. The grand article is to be in good health. May your journey restore their primitive elasticity to your organs! May dissipation disperse the fogs of melancholy, which have arisen in your mind; that, suffering less under the fatal influence of matter, you may freely yield to the impulse of your vast genius!

On which I pray, &c.

L E T.

L E T T E R LXVI.

From the King.

November 1, 1770.

YOU and Voltaire laugh at my expence, when you tell me you suppose me of use to the progress of philosophy. Descartes, Newton, Bayle, D'Alembert and Voltaire have imparted lustre to science. For my part, I am only what the Italians call a *dilettante*. I seat myself with other amateurs in the pit, and applaud beauties. My whole merit consists in clapping, in proper places.

You must have received an enormous epistle from me, in which I have employed every weapon my metaphysical arsenal of arguments could supply. There is but one of these abstract subjects capable of demonstration, which is that of materialism; and, this being well proved, we must satisfy ourselves with different degrees of probability, concerning such others as become objects of speculation, or of amusement, to those who think proper thus to exercise their fancy; and of exercise to such as wish to improve in precision. After all, good digestion is of more impor-

importance, to mankind, than the knowledge of the essence of things.

I congratulate you, on having found benefit by the exercise of travelling. Your health perhaps would have been entirely restored, had you taken the whole dose. What ! See yourself at the foot of the Alps, and return to the land of Oc*, instead of visiting that theatre of great deeds (contemptible indeed in its present state) on which that king of nations acted whom the known world obeyed ! What a pleasure must it have been, to you, to contemplate the crowd of quacks whose leaders have brought their drugs into discredit ; to behold them, I say, on their tottering stages, without one auditor attending to their mummery.

Instead of a spectacle so grand, you are going to be present, at Thoulouse, at a banquet of cannibals, where men continue to celebrate the anniversary of a barbarous murder. At Aix, you will meet the relations of those who gave orders for the massacre of Merindal ; and, on your road, you will find the faggots still smoking, amid which so many wretches were de-

* *Chez le peuple d'Oc.*—The king alludes to Occitanie, the name by which the province of Languedoc was known in the lower age, and to the capital of which he immediately afterward tells us D'Alembert was going. T.

voured by the flames. Oh! How preferable is Italy to Provence! The cordelier, Ganganelli, is become accustomed to the motion of the earth; he tacitly consents it should turn, and you would not have had the fate of Galileo to fear, at Rome.

Philosopher as you are, however, take care how you disobey the faculty. Physicians are infallible; like the Pope, at the head of an œcumenic council. I beg you will impress this truth strongly on your mind, that, if they should prescribe a journey to Berlin, to restore the active powers of your stomach, you may not fail to undertake it; and especially that you may not repent, when you have travelled as far as Westphalia.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R LXVII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, November 26, 1770.

ON my arrival at Paris, three days since, I found three letters; with which I have been honoured

honoured by your majesty, during my journey, and which could not be sent me; because, having travelled about five hundred leagues in two months, going and coming, and consequently having made no long stay in any place, it was difficult to address them to me, with safety. I therefore first humbly entreat your majesty will excuse me, that I have not had the honour to answer sooner. You will perceive that this at least was the first duty of which I acquitted myself, after a few moments of repose, which were indispensably necessary.

I next entreat you will, for some days longer, permit me to defer the answer I owe your most philosophic and profound letter, dated Oct. 18. Such a letter, sire, demands some time for reflection; that its propositions may be meditated, and discussed. With your majesty's permission, I shall therefore confine myself, at present, to answer your two other letters, dated September 26th and November 1st.

Your majesty appears surprised that the letter of a German, which is the expression you have been pleased to use, should have been read at the French academy, in full assembly. But how can we apply the epithet German, to a sovereign who writes such letters; whether we regard the subject or the style? I cannot describe

scribe to your majesty how much my *living* associates were penetrated, by admiration and gratitude. Their unanimous determination, to insert the letter in the registers of the academy, is a sufficient proof of the sentiments it excited. As to the *defunct* abbé d'Olivet, I am persuaded that, if his ghost had any knowledge of the transaction, it could not but grind its teeth, supposing that a ghost has any teeth, at not detecting one solecism.

All that your majesty has had the goodness to say to me, concerning the fame due to genius, is worthy of a mind like yours, as equitable as it is elevated. This balm, as your majesty calls it, is indeed most necessary to the greatest men; and especially to great men suffering persecution. Superior talents held in little esteem, in any country, greatly resemble the indigent wretch who, having no meat, went and stood in the fumes that issued from a cook's shop while he ate his bread. Such fumes support philosophers in their labours: but they cease to be smoke, and become real and solid food, when this manna proceeds from heros and princes, on whom the eyes of the age have been constantly fixed. I leave to your majesty, or indeed to the whole world, rather than to your majesty, the application of this maxim.

Your majesty pretends that I and Voltaire divert ourselves at your expence, when we deem you useful to the progress of philosophy—Not useful, fire, but more, exceedingly necessary—Necessary by your works, which serve at once to enlighten and inform; necessary from the example you give to sovereigns, not to hide their candle under a bushel, when to be admired it is only requisite for it to be seen; and, in fine, necessary by the protection you grant all those who endeavour to render their labours of utility. Such, fire, are our thoughts, collectively. This is what we in concert say, at all times, and in all places; and which we never cease to repeat; much less for the sake of your fame than for our own encouragement, and consolation.

Your majesty would have been better pleased, had I gone to see our lady of Loretto, and the Recollet friars of the capitol, rather than the white, black, blue, grey, and red penitents, who are dispersed over Languedoc. To a philosopher, the sight of the one is as good as the other; and, with respect to Vesuvius and St. Peter of Rome, I dreaded, fire, after consulting the physicians, and from the knowledge I had of my own want of strength, that the fatigues of a journey of five hundred leagues, from Paris

to Naples, over the frosts and snows of the Alps and Apennines, on the worst of all possible roads, where are the most detestable of inns. I dreaded, I say, that these would do my poor head more harm than good; and that the pleasures which the beauties of nature and art in Italy would afford, would be inadequate to the danger. I durst not even proceed to the farther part of Provence, because of the unhealthy winds, the ill effects of which I had felt in Lower Languedoc, and which as I feared would but increase. I am now, sire, returned to my household gods; much rather fatigued than cured, but in some degree relieved, having gained strength, and being not without hope of perfect recovery, this winter, with much regimen and exercise.

M. Mettra, at my departure, in money and bills, remitted me the sum which your majesty was pleased to grant, for my journey into Italy, not the half of which, sire, I have expended; and I have returned three thousand five hundred livres (one hundred and forty-five pounds sterling) in bills, to M. Mettra, of which I had no need. He will consequently expend this sum on other objects, agreeable to your majesty's orders. The more I am affected, by the goodness of your majesty, the less ought I to abuse your benefits.

During my journey, the public papers informed me of the death of one of the princes of Brunswic, your majesty's nephew. I hope your majesty is convinced how sincerely, and warmly, I participate in your affliction. Whatever can affect your majesty will, to the end of life, be most interesting to me.

In such sentiments, and with the most profound respect, I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXVIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, November 30, 1770.

ONCE again, since your majesty permits or rather requires me so to do, behold me enter the lists of metaphysics, much rather with than against your majesty. It is not from respect only that I thus express myself; for, after attentively considering your majesty's opinions on these abstruse subjects, which I take the liberty to discuss with you, my metaphysics appear to me to differ, in reality, so little with yours, that our arguments ought not even to be called
a con-

a controversy, much less a dispute*. I therefore take the liberty once more to converse with your majesty, on these dark questions, much rather for the sake of information than of contradiction.

I first agree, with your majesty, that there is a common principle ; which appears as evident to me as it does to you. Creation is absurd, and impossible. Matter is therefore not to be created, consequently has not been created, consequently is eternal. This result, however clear and necessary, will not well accord with the true partisans of the existence of a God, who insist on an almighty, immaterial, and active intelligence. But this is of small importance. We seek truth, and not their pleasure. I afterward perceive, throughout the various parts of the system of the world, and particularly in the formation of animals, traces, which at least may be called striking, of intelligence and design. We have therefore to enquire if there be, in effect, any real intelligence; and, if the affirmative be granted, to divine, if we are able, what that intelligence is.

I cannot doubt but that this intelligence is at

* We do not, in English, understand these words in a sense so distinct from each other as they are here understood, by M. D'Alembert. T.

least annexed to some parts of matter ; for men and animals are my proofs. It is farther certain that it directs most of their motions, and is the principle of all the rational actions of man, and particularly of all that is great and admirable ; such as the invention of arts and sciences.

Is this intelligence, existing in men and animals, distinct from, or only a property of, matter, dependent on organization ?

Experience seems to prove, nay to demonstrate, the latter ; since intelligence increases and diminishes, according to the perfection or imperfection of organization.

But how may organization be productive of feeling and thought ? In the human body, like as in rude matter, whether solid or fluid, we only perceive particles susceptible of figure, motion, and rest. Why is intelligence annexed to some particles, and not to others ? Or why should the latter seem unsusceptible of intelligence ? These are questions to which we probably shall never find any solution. But, in spite of our ignorance, experience seems invincibly to prove to me, as to your majesty, the materiality of mind ; like as the most simple reasoning proves eternal Being ; though we neither can conceive Being that has eternally existed, nor Being that begins to exist.

We

We have now to examine whether that intelligence, dependent on the formation of matter, be expanded through all parts of matter.

This question appears more difficult than the preceding. The bodies of animals excepted, all particles of matter, with which we are acquainted, appear to us destitute of feeling, intelligence, and thought. Can intelligence reside in them unsuspected by us? Of this there is no appearance; and I am much disposed to believe, not only that a block of marble, but that other bodies*, however ingeniously and finely organized, neither think nor feel. Yet, it is answered, the organization of these bodies discovers visible traces of intelligence. This I do not deny; but I wish to know what is become of that intelligence, after the bodies are formed. Was it resident in them, during their formation? Did it reside in them for their formation? And if, as is supposed, it be a thing distinct from them, what became of it when its work was performed? Is it annihilated by the perfection of organization, although necessary for its progress and conclusion? This seems difficult to conceive.

* *Les corps bruts*. The collective arguments of the author prove that he can mean nothing but plants, and vegetative nature, by the epithet *bruts*. T.

Beside, if that intelligence, the effects and productions of which we admire, be in man the consequence of organization only, why should we not admit, in other parts of matter, a formation and propensity as necessary and as natural as matter itself; whence shall result, without the interference of any intelligence, those effects which, being seen, excite our surprise?

In fine, admitting an intelligence which has presided at the formation of the world, and continues to preside for its support, we shall at last be obliged to own it is neither infinitely wise nor infinitely puissant; for wretched humanity is a testimony that this is far from the best of all possible worlds. We are therefore reduced, with the best of inclinations, to admit at most only of a material deity, confined and dependent. I know not whether it will satisfy him, but it certainly will not satisfy the zealous partisans of the existence of a God, who would rather see us atheists than disciples of Spinoza, as we are. To soften their anger, let us become sceptics, and again repeat—"What know I?"

I shall now accompany your majesty from darkness to darkness; and, since I have done myself the honour to plunge with you up to the neck, and even over head, in the abyss, I shall proceed to the question of freedom. It seems

to me that, in reality, I am of your majesty's opinion, and that we have only to define the idea which we annex to the word freedom. If we understand by this word, as your majesty seems to understand, an exemption from constraint and the exercise of the will, it is evident that we are free ; since we act from self-determination, wholly uncontrolled, and often with pleasure. But such determination is not less a necessary consequence of the propensity, equally necessary, of our organs ; and of the effect, once again equally necessary, produced upon us by the action of other beings. If stones knew they were falling, and took a pleasure in their fall, they would imagine the act to be free ; because they fell with their own consent.

But I do not think, sire, that, even on the system of absolute necessity, I shall find no difficulty to admit that reward and punishment are useless. They are only additional springs and regulators, requisite to make the machine go, and to render it less imperfect. There would be more crimes in a world in which there should be neither reward nor punishment ; like as there would be more disorder in a watch, which should want some of its wheels.

Your majesty kindly leads me by the hand through this labyrinth of philosophic obscurity ;

but, thanks to you, sire, at length I see the light, and arrive at an object respecting which I have the good fortune to be absolutely of your opinion. I speak of the nature and progress of the religion of Europe. It appears as evident to me as to your majesty that Christianity, in its origin, was pure deism; that its author, Jesus Christ, was only a kind of philosopher, the foe of superstition, of persecution, and of priests; one who taught men benevolence and justice, and reduced all law to the love of our neighbour, and the adoration of God, in spirit and in truth. Such was the primitive state of this religion. It was first St. Paul, afterward the fathers of the church, and the councils finally, which were unfortunately supported by kings, that changed this religion. I therefore think we should do great service to mankind, could we reduce Christianity to its primitive state, and confine ourselves to preach to the people a rewarding and avenging God; who reproves superstition, detests intolerance, and who requires no other homage from men than that of love to each other, and mutual support. For, having well inculcated these truths among the people, no great effort I think would be necessary to make them forget the opinions they have been taught; and which have been seized, with a kind of avidity,

avidity, only because nothing better has been substituted. The multitude is no doubt a foolish animal, which suffers itself to be led into darkness, when no light shines. But offer this animal the truth, and if this truth be simple, and especially if it appeal to the heart, as the religion which I propose to preach would, I think it must infallibly be embraced, and preferred to all other doctrine. Unfortunately, we are at present far distant from so happy a revolution in the opinions of men.

At length I come, sire, to the monarch so much beloved, during his life, and perhaps too much decried after his death; but to whom men seem to begin to render what is due, without flattery, and without detraction. In spite of the advantage he has, of being defended by a prince in every respect much greater than himself, which at present is the opinion of all Europe, and which opinion will be strengthened in future ages, I take the liberty, sire, of saying of this monarch what La Fontaine said of St. Paul, to his confessor—"Your St. Paul is no man for me."

I will allow for every thing he has performed, of great and of useful; and will grant that the sciences, arts, and letters are greatly indebted to him; but his wars, which often were most unjust,

just, his pride, his intolerant spirit, his revocation of the edict of Nantes, and his subjection to the Jesuits, place a fearful counterpoise in the other scale.

With respect to the example he has given sovereigns, of maintaining enormous armies, in order to be just, we must begin by allowing that, at present, it is impossible for the best informed monarchs to avoid following his example. It would be equally repugnant to reason, and the duties they owe their subjects, to remain unarmed, when the whole world is "clothed in complete steel." But I take the liberty to ask your majesty whether you would not be better pleased, were you not thus constrained, to have a hundred thousand husbandmen more, and a hundred thousand soldiers less? The first enrich, the latter expend.

I know great armies render wars of shorter duration, but poverty is the cause; and it appears to me better, if we have a hundred thousand men to throw away, that they should be squandered in twenty or in thirty years, rather than in six or seven.

I also grant great armies are the cause that we are not now, as formerly, obliged to beat up for soldiers, at the first firing of a gun. But might not a monarch, who should be a warrior and

and no philosopher, abuse standing armies, to make war as often and with as much levity as Louis XIV. reproached himself with having done, on his death bed? The money necessary for the maintenance of such armies keeps Europe, even in times of peace, in a continual state of tension, which is but little different from a continual state of war.

I am at the end of my second sheet, and perceive, but a little too late, that I abuse the patience and bounty of your majesty. I therefore entreat you to pardon my dull prolixity, and to regard it as a consequence of the wish I have to obtain information; and especially as the testimony of the unalterable sentiments, profound respect, and eternal gratitude with which, &c.

L E T T E R LXIX.

From the King.

December 2, 1770.

TO regain health in part is an advantage, and to find ease is a good. I therefore think I am not wrong in congratulating you, on the effect of the remedies prescribed by your physicians

ficians of Paris. I find you have not made any stay in the country of the old Troubadours, but that you are returned to the metropolis. Do not mention finance to me; it is a language which strikes too often upon my ear, and I say with Pilate—"What is written is written."

I send you the dream of a philosopher, against whom Voltaire is irritated. As I pressed this philosopher to learn whether the vision were his own, he confessed that the little prophet Waldstock, being here, had dropped it from his pocket, as he took out his handkerchief. You can return it him, for it is not in the order of things that my philosopher should take to himself what is not his due.

I thank you for your condolence on the death of my nephew. The poor lad died of a quinsy, after the last battle, in which the Russians took the Turkish camp. His mother was inconsolable, for he was a youth of great promise.

I shall not mention philosophy to you at present. I have sent you packets, on metaphysics, which you must have found at Paris. After all, it is a subject that resembles a ditch; the more you dig the deeper it is. We may, without much danger, remain ignorant of many things. The most important is to live well, to enjoy tolerable health, and to be in possession of friends
and

and a tranquil mind ; all which advantages I wish you.

Praying God, &c.

L E T T E R LXX.

From the King.

December 18, 1770.

YOU will perhaps think it singular that I should interfere in other people's affairs ; and that, being a school-boy of sixty, I should seat myself on the form of doctors in metaphysics, and treat on subjects which the learned understand little more of than the most ignorant. But this is the very reason why I think myself authorised for thus speaking. Did the question relate to infinitesimal calculation, or to the properties of curves, I should sit and listen in silence, believe all you might tell me and admire. But here we are transported into the land of imagination, over which poets have more claims than philosophers ; for it is known they were the first theologians, and the original teachers of mankind. Our design not being to inebriate ourselves with ancient fables, which still are credited, but rather

to bear the torch of reason into the region of darkness, there to distinguish, if we can, some truths in the gloomy abyss, and separate real objects from the imaginary beings by which they are surrounded, we must set aside all illusions of the fancy, and endeavour to reason as consistently as we can. Our subjects are God, Freedom, Religion, and Louis XIV.

I begin with God. According to the least contradictory idea we can form of this being, I am convinced he cannot be material; because he would then be penetrable, divisible, and finite. If I suppose him a spirit, I employ a metaphysical term which I do not understand, taking it according to the definition of philosophers; I utter nonsense; for a being that occupies no space, and has no real existence, cannot possibly exist. I therefore give up matter and pure spirit; and, that I may conceive some idea of God, I imagine him to be the sensorium of the universe, as the intelligence annexed to the eternal organization of the worlds which exist. And in this I do not approach the system of Spinoza; nor that of the Stoics, who regarded all thinking beings as emanations from the grand universal spirit, which their faculty of thinking was to rejoin after death.

The proofs of this intelligence, or of this sensorium,

forum, are these—The astonishing agreement which exists in the whole physical arrangement of the world, vegetable and animal; and in the intelligence of man. For, if nature were unintelligent, she could not give that which she had not; such being a gross contradiction.

The subject of freedom is not less dark than that of the existence of God. Yet the following are a few reflections, which merit consideration.

Whence does it happen that men possess, and are pleased with, a sensation of their freedom? Could they possess this sensation, and this pleasure, if freedom had no existence?

But, since we must annex some precise idea to words, I define freedom to be that act of our will which enables us to choose, between different propositions, and which determines our choice. If therefore I exercise this act occasionally, it is a sign I possess the power: Man no doubt is determined by reason; to imagine otherwise would be madness. The supposition of his own preservation, and welfare, is one of the powerful motives which make him incline to that side on which he imagines he shall find such advantages. There are however worthy minds, that are able to prefer the good to the useful, that willingly sacrifice wealth, or life, to patri-

otic views; and this choice is the greatest of the acts of freedom.

You answer, all these resolutions are the consequence of our organization, and of the exterior objects which act upon our senses. But, without organs, we should have as much thought as a harpsichord would of sound, if deprived of strings. I grant that all our knowledge is the consequence of sensation; but let us distinguish this knowledge from those combinations which occasion it to act, transform it, and turn it to admirable uses.

Still you persist, and allege our passions. You would be victorious, were the passions always so; but they are often conquered. I am acquainted with persons who have corrected their defects. How great is the difference between a man well and a man ill educated; between a novice in the world and a person of experience! Now, were the doctrine of necessity true, no one could correct his defects, which would ever remain invariable. All exhortation would be vain, and experience would neither improve the imprudent nor the thoughtless. I therefore venture to suspect this system of necessity of contradiction; for, if it be rigorously admitted, laws, education, reward, and punishment would be useless, and superfluous. If every thing be the
effect

effect of necessity, nothing can be subject to change; but experience shews me that education produces great effects; that men may be corrected and encouraged; and I am daily more and more convinced that reward and punishment are the bulwarks of society. I therefore cannot admit an opinion contrary to the truths of experience; truths so palpable that even those who embrace the system of necessity continually contradict it, as well in their private lives as by their public actions. What then must become of a system which can make us guilty of nothing but folly, if it be admitted literally true?

And now for religion, on which subject I dare flatter myself you will allow me to be impartial.

I think that a philosopher who should venture to teach the vulgar religion unmixed with fable would be in danger of lapidation. Should he find some new-formed soul, some American savage, not prejudiced in favour of any opinion, he might persuade him to prefer a rational religion, to those which fable has so much degraded. But, even could the religion of Socrates or of Cicero be propagated, in any province, its purity would soon become sullied, by the introduction of superstition. Men will have objects which strike the senses, and amuse the imagination. This we see among the protes-

tants; who, finding themselves brought up in a worship too naked, too simple, often become catholics, from their love of festivals, ceremonies, and the fine anthems with which the holy catholic, apostolic, and Roman religion has bedizened, encumbered, and furbelowed, the simple morality of Christ. Witness the landgrave of Hesse, baron Pöllnitz, and numerous others. But, were it granted you could retrieve men from so many errors, it is still a question whether they are worthy of being enlightened.

Louis XIV. should properly be defended by the French themselves, on whom he bestowed fine manufactures and frontiers; which latter he so well fortified that he almost freed his kingdom from the fear of an attack. He was also the protector of letters, and should be justified by the French, from motives of gratitude. But, since it is your will I should be the Don Quixote, I take the liberty to observe to you that the Romans, long before Louis, maintained armies equally great; and that, had we here a hundred thousand additional husbandmen, we should want three hundred thousand acres more to afford them employment; for each field has a master and men sufficient for its cultivation. What confidence can be placed in the faith of sovereigns, in general, who most
of

of them are without faith? Who shall grind down those puppets that act from I know not what fatality, and bring them pacific from the mill?

Let Europe only contain two restless monarchs and all will be alarm, and confusion. Thus then I reason: wars have existed in all ages; and what has always been must from necessity be, although I am ignorant of the cause. Hence, this destructive scourge will ever desolate our unfortunate globe.

You must also permit me not to think with you, concerning the revocation of the edict of Nantes. I am really very much obliged to Louis XIV; and, if his grandson would follow his august example, I should be quite penetrated with gratitude: especially were he, at the same time, to banish the philosophic vermin from his kingdom; whom, as exiles, I should charitably receive into Prussia. You would give me great pleasure, could you persuade your ministers to strike this great stroke. The academicians in a body would come to meet you, bear you on their shoulders, and the schismatic philosopher would afford you the warmest welcome. But you know his sentiments, of which you cannot doubt.

I pray, &c.

Q₂

LET-

L E T T E R LXXI.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, January 3, 1771.

YOUR majesty may say to me as Augustus does to Cinna, in the tragedy—

Je t'ai comblés de biens, je t'en veux accabler.

With the most respectful gratitude, I therefore obey your reiterated commands; and, since it is your pleasure I should employ the greatest part of the sum you had destined for my journey into Italy to other purposes, I should imagine I failed in my duty, to my august benefactor, were I longer to insist, and not to accept the donation he has generously been pleased to bestow.

Your majesty has conferred another present, for which I am not less grateful. I mean your very pleasant, very poetical, very witty, and very philosophic production. I have repeatedly read it, and always with new pleasure. I have exclaimed, striking my forehead, “Curfed mathematician, gloomy ponderer over x and y , “why hast thou not rather the talent of versifi-

* I have heaped, and now would overwhelm thee with, my favours.

“ cation

“ cation than that of cyphering ! Thou wouldest
 “ employ thy time much better, in turning this
 “ jocular production into rhyme.” However,
 I consoled myself, by remembering, should it
 be the author’s pleasure to put it in this form,
 it will sustain no loss. For who could better
 clothe it in verse than he who has already so
 well expressed himself in prose ? I have no
 doubt but your majesty has sent this charming
 work to the grand and mortal enemy of bigotry,
 who has the honour of being so gloriously cele-
 brated by the philosopher of kings, and the
 king of philosophers. Oh Voltaire ! How sweet
 and consolatory is the satisfaction thou enjoyest !
 Yet I envy not thy happiness ; for who is wor-
 thy to partake it with thee !

This same Voltaire informs me that your ma-
 jesty has sent him some delightful verses, coming
 from the emperor of China. Why cannot I
 resist the wish to possess them, and add them to
 the jocular production I have received ? Shall I
 be guilty of indiscretion, in making this request
 to your majesty ?

I perceived, when you did me the honour to
 send your dream, that it certainly is no sleepy
 tale. You had not received the tiresome, pro-
 lix, philosophic rhapsody, in which I made so
 feeble a reply to your excellent metaphysical

letter, of the 1st of November. Although I may not reason so well as your majesty on these thorny subjects, and on many others, I have at least the satisfaction of perceiving that I think nearly as you do ; and that I am better pleased to be ignorant, in your company, than in possession of so much knowledge, in that of the author of the *Système de la Nature*, on subjects concerning which nothing is known.

I am told, your majesty at present is possessed of a telescope, by M. Beguelin ; which must be excellent, if it resemble his memoirs on this subject, which I have read with great pleasure and profit, and the merit of which I am the more able to estimate, because I have been accustomed to such studies, though not with equal success. This academician, sire, is highly worthy of your majesty's favour and protection.

Be pleased, sire, to accept, with your usual goodness, the ardent prayers I offer up for the preservation of your precious life, the prosperity of your undertakings, and that you may enjoy that glory and happiness which your majesty so much merits.

With these sentiments, as well as with the tenderest and most profound respect, which I shall to the last sigh maintain,

I am, &c.

LETTER LXXII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, February 1, 1771.

A MONTH ago, I did myself the honour to thank your majesty, for the jocular, though exceedingly philosophic dream, you had the goodness to send me. At present, I have new thanks to return, not for your dream, but for your very profound letter; of which duty I should much sooner have acquitted myself, had it not been for the rheumatism, which for a fortnight has deprived me of the power of writing, and the effects of which I still feel.

The more I reflect, the more, to my great satisfaction, I perceive that I only differ from your majesty in my mode of expression, relative to the existence and nature of a Supreme Being; or of the Being called God. Your majesty will not allow him to be purely material*;

* Were it not for the context it would be difficult to say what idea M. D'Alembert annexed to the words *purement materiel*; it is evident he disbelieved the existence of *spirit*, and that he supposed thought to be the result of organization. He is inaccurate by labouring to differ as little as possible, at least in words, from the king; and, instead of *purely material*, he means *matter unorganized*. T.

and in this I agree. Neither can you form an idea of pure spirit; to which I likewise assent. You consequently regard God as—*the Intelligence annexed to the eternal organization of existing worlds*. From this proposition it seems to result, according to your majesty, that God is nothing more than matter, *as far as matter is intelligent*; to which I can see nothing to oppose, since a part of matter is certainly intelligent, and men are free to give the name of God to matter, as far as matter is endowed with this attribute.

I am perfectly of your majesty's opinion, in your definition of freedom. I, like your majesty, define it to be—*that act of our will which enables us to choose between different propositions, and which determines our choice*. But I pretend, and it seems to me your majesty does not disown, there always are some motives or causes, which necessarily determine us. Nor do I perceive that the contrary is proved, by the remarks of your majesty. Those who resist their passions, resist from motives which are to them stronger than the passions themselves; and exhortation, punishment, and reward, when men are determined by them, occasion this determination; because they are motives more powerful than any others by which they are opposed. Hence I
cannot

cannot but conclude we always act from necessity, though voluntarily. It is most voluntarily that I do not poison myself; yet is it at the same time of necessity; because the reasons which at this moment attach me to life are stronger than those which might detach from life.

With respect to the enquiry—*Whether the multitude ought to have a rational religion*—as unfortunately I cannot bring any example in proof, while your majesty can adduce the whole surface of our little dust-heap, I am much tempted to believe you are right. Did the treaty of Westphalia admit of a fourth religion in the empire, I should entreat your majesty to build a simple temple, at Berlin, or at Potsdam, in which God might be honoured in a manner worthy of himself; where humanity and justice should be preached; and if the crowd did not resort to this temple, after an experiment of some years, for, to gain the cause of reason, some years would be necessary, your majesty would be entirely victorious: nor would it be the first time.

I shall only speak a word on Louis XIV. I perfectly feel how much your majesty is obliged to him, for his revocation of the edict of Nantes; but, as advocate for France, I hope your majesty will allow that this fine kingdom ought to think differently

differently on the subject. I know not whether philosophers will there be treated as heretics have been ; but I know that, should such a time come, the states of your majesty would be to them the most flattering and the most glorious asylum, and that your bounty would afford them the best of consolation.

I am, with the most profound respect, and admiration equal to my gratitude, &c.

P. S. Permit me, sire, to add a work which your majesty has had the goodness to approve, in manuscript, and to which I have made some additions.

L E T T E R LXXIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, March 6, 1771.

ABOUT a fortnight since, I received some charming verses from your majesty, addressed to your comrade in royalty and philosophy, the emperor, or the king of China. My first duty is humbly to return thanks to your majesty, for your goodness, in acceding to the
desire

desire I had indicated to read these verses, after the praises bestowed on them by the patriarch of French poetry. But I am still greater thanks in your majesty's debt, for the pleasure which this reading has afforded me; nor can I refuse myself that of thus assuring your majesty of its reality: though I perceive, by the charming and philosophic letter which accompanies your poem, that you are suspicious of praise, even when coming from a mathematician, who never praised where he did not esteem. But the best manner of praising, that is to say, the most simple, is to praise by our actions; and I shall just observe to your majesty that, even at the first reading of your excellent epistle, I remembered, in my own despite, a great number of the lines; and, if I do not mistake, the merit of poetry is to be remembered. In my opinion, this is an infallible touchstone of its worth. I therefore, sire, take the liberty to say, mathematician as I am, that your verses are excellent; since a brain loaded with x y and z has still room for them: and, on this subject, I shall be—

Dur comme un géomètre en ses opinions *.

I perceive your majesty has always a lash in store for geometry. I shall answer you as the

* As positive in opinion as a mathematician.

regent duke of Orleans did one of his mistresses, who spoke against God—"You might as well be silent, madam, for you shall be saved."—Your majesty might as well be silent too, for you are more of a mathematician than you suspect, or than many who pretend so to be. All just, precise, and clear minds appertain to geometry; in which quality we hope, sire, you will do us the honour to be one of us; for this is an engagement you long since signed and sealed to, by your writings.

In return for the excellent poetry your majesty sends me, I take the liberty to inclose some poor prose, which I have scribbled. I mean the discourse and the dialogue I had the honour to read in the presence of his majesty the king of Sweden; the one at the academy of sciences, and the other at the French academy. I had occasion, in the discourse, to render that homage to your majesty which the sciences, letters, and philosophy long have owed you, for the protection with which you have honoured them, and the excellent works by which you have contributed to their progress. I must do the academicians the justice to say their applause, at this part of my discourse, was unanimous. In fact, I did but feebly express, though with all the force and truth of which I was capable, the profound sentiments

sentiments of admiration, gratitude, and respect, with which all Frenchmen of letters are penetrated for your majesty.

Your worthy nephew, the king of Sweden, seems desirous to march in your steps: nor could he form himself on a finer model. He bears with him, from France, the universal esteem and attachment of all those who have had the honour to approach his presence. His sudden departure has deprived me of the happiness of paying my court to him, except momentarily; but his kindness has penetrated me with gratitude. It is said he is to have an interview with your majesty, as he passes through Magdeburg; that he has things to relate, concerning what he has seen; and subjects of reflection for your majesty, in part afflicting, in part pleasant, but always philosophic, and such, in a word, as you are accustomed to make.

I am, with the most profound respect, and *mathematical* attachment, &c.

L E T T E R LXXIV.

From the King.

March 13, 1771.

I Occasionally amuse myself with subjects of pleasantry, that I may enliven the sterility of philosophy ; but, since you lead me back into the sacred temple in which our ignorance shines most, I follow.

You begin by proposing an alarming subject ; no less than God himself, incomprehensible to a being limited as I am, and of whom I can form no idea, except by comparing him to an organized body, that enjoys the power of thought. I contemplate the whole organization of the universe, and say to myself—" If thou who art but " a worm, being animated, canst think, why " should not those immense bodies which are " in perpetual motion be productive of thought, " much superior to thine ?"

This appears to me very probable ; but I have not the vanity to presume, like the ancient stoics, that our soul is an emanation from that great Being, and which, after death, it shall rejoin. For God is not divisible ; and men are guilty of folly, which God is not. In fine, the eternal and divine nature cannot nor ought not

to communicate with perishable beings, and creatures whose existence has not the duration of a moment, compared with eternity ! Such is my confession of faith, and what I have been able to combine least absurd, on a subject which never has been understood, since the world was a world.

You hence conduct me into paths equally thorny ; and I think I perceive some misunderstanding which, being rectified, will immediately make us agree. If you by *necessity* understand the same thing as I do by *adequate cause*, here ends our dispute. However, I have still some remarks to make. We must not imagine that all men are determined because they have first well weighed the opposing reasons ; there are animals found, among these unfeathered bipeds, who decide from the first dictates of the imagination. I was acquainted with a duke of Mecklenburg who addicted himself to rhabdomancy. These things prove that all people are not actuated by the same motives ; and that reason is confined to the guidance of those who are called the most sage. If you persist to call that necessity which I call reason, our contest is ended. But, if you suppose the reality of the doctrine of fate (or predestination) which makes us act like puppets, I shall find some trouble in becoming

becoming one of these puppets, in my old age.

You must be allowed to disapprove the revocation of the edict of Nantes; though several of the persons proscribed, by Le Tellier, made great fortunes, in the countries they chose for their asylum. Not to mention that France is too populous. In the temples of these refugees, the religion you propose is in part found. Moral discourses are only preached there, and opinions are left to slumber, concealed in the thousands of volumes written on such subjects, which are now no longer read.

I am persuaded that a fanatic philosopher is the greatest of all possible monsters, and at the same time the most inconsistent animal earth ever produced. I satisfy myself therefore with suffering no constraint, concerning the little which my small quantity of faith will permit me to believe; and, far from making converts, I leave each being free to build his system, according to his good pleasure. You have now my confession entire. May you possess health and content.

On which I pray, &c.

P. S. The affair you recommended to me, relating to a canonesse of Cleves, does not defend

pend on me; for there are laws and foundation-rules, which cannot be departed from.

L E T T E R LXXV.

From the King.

April 4, 1771.

YOU bestow more praises on the answer of the emperor of China to Voltaire than it deserves. Though a poet, this good emperor is in want of a secretary to labour for him, when he has any affairs to treat of with the people of the East; and, as I have the honour to serve him in this capacity, I have endeavoured to express the sentiments of this puissant monarch, in the Gallic tongue. He has become acquainted with some mathematical Jesuits; and, as he found them all positive in their opinions, he thence too hastily concluded that geometricians are unanimously pertinacious. But I hope to cure him of this prejudice; especially if he will take the trouble to read the trial of Newton and Leibnitz, on the discovery of fluxions; and the writings of the great Bernouilli and his brother, who sent each other challenges for the solution

of problems. It were to be wished that no person should be positive in opinion hereafter, mathematicians excepted. No man would suffer harm, whether the catenaria be or be not applicable to the balance of a watch; but, when opinions are in agitation which executioners maintain by death and unheard-of cruelties, instead of argument, it is no longer a joke; and you have still some such reasoners in France, who would indulge in all the fire of fanaticism, if they could with impunity. I have heard some very melancholy accounts of this kind, but which powerful reasons forbid me to publish.

I have read your discourse, and the dialogue of Descartes. I thank you for having mentioned my name in a company of philosophers, among whom my ignorance ought to place me beyond the ambition of praise. The dialogue of Descartes is a finished work, and the more admirable because the subject was opposite to the person to whom it was applied, and the praise was ingenious, well imagined and true.

I am not acquainted with the king of Sweden, but I shall be glad to see him, for I have heard him applauded by persons well read in mankind. He need but imitate himself, and continue as he has begun. But what a country is Sweden, for the arts! One of its most learned
men

men affirms that the lost paradise is discovered in Scania*, and a botanist, one Linnæus, affirms horses and men are of the same species †. I know not the name of another madman, who conjures up ghosts ‡ and converses with the spirits of the dead. On examining such a race, we should say that never could philosopher like Descartes have set foot in Sweden. Either he understood mental agriculture ill, or the seeds which he sowed have strangely degenerated.

Those who mean to honour queen Christina, for her abdication, begin by affirming that, indignant at the want of knowledge and the savage manners of the Swedes of her time, she preferred a private life, among a civilized and ingenious people, to the pleasure of reigning, where she could not esteem. As for the present king, if I lay my money it shall be that he will not abdicate for any such reasons. He will no doubt attempt to enlighten the north, and to promote the love of the arts and sciences, that they may ascend the throne usurped by ancient

* *Le Paradis perdu s'est trouvé en Scanie.* The king here indulges a play upon words. T.

† His majesty had been told something, and he did not exactly recollect what. D'Alembert could not but smile at *one Linnæus*. T.

‡ Swedenborg. T.

prejudices and Gothic pedantry, from which the universities of this country are not yet freed.

A political testament, under the name of Voltaire, is circulated here by some wag, who must have collected his opinions, and has certainly forged it according to his own fancy. I shall be much surprised should no anonymous author think proper to write in the name of poor D'Argens, and regale us with a work which he will have composed in the Elysian fields. I truly regret him; he was an honest man and a real philosopher, possessed of much knowledge, of which he knew how to make use. His style was sometimes troubled with a diarrhœa, and it was his indolence that prevented him from correcting the works he published. Scarcely had he finished a sheet before, without reading it, he sent it to the bookseller. If any one would take the trouble to select, excellent things might be collected from his works. But a man may be both loquacious and virtuous; and the last quality is superior to every other. It is a fine varnish which conceals many spots that are but too abundant in the picture of humanity.

I hope you have less severe weather at Paris than we have here, and that you enjoy perfect health of body, and unshaken peace of mind.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T.

L E T T E R LXXVI.

From M. D'Alembert.

Paris, April 21, 1771.

I RECEIVED almost at the same time the two letters with which your majesty has been pleased to honour me. My first care was to conform, if possible, to the wish which your majesty testified, in the second of these letters, that I should procure some one of the fables of the duke de Nivernois. As he was not then at Paris, I wrote to him immediately, and take the liberty to send your majesty the answer he returned me. I greatly regret my want of success; but I can in part inform your majesty of the manner of these fables, which are rather in the style of those of De la Motte than of any other fabulist; but better written, and with more taste.

I am highly flattered by the approbation your majesty has the goodness to bestow on the two short works I did myself the honour to send. You seem to prefer the dialogue to the discourse, and I shall take care not to appeal from your judgment. I shall, however, be free enough to own the discourse is more dear to me than the

dialogue; the reason of which I would wish your majesty to divine.

It seems to me that the subject of our little controversy, or metaphysical discussion, is exhausted; and farther to weary your majesty would but be fastidious. All things well considered, I perceive I differ but little from you; and this little difference is necessary, for the honour of metaphysical obscurity. The points most essential, as your majesty well remarks, are to feel and confess that our feeble understandings cannot penetrate into such subjects; and especially that we should not wish to maintain, by executioners and faggots, what scarcely can be supported by frail arguments. Philosophy might probably suffer this wretched fate in France, if as we are threatened the Jesuits should be recalled. The parliament, by which they were expelled, has been banished in turn. It was but little more tolerant or more favourable to philosophy than the sons of Loyola were; but, if this jesuitical cohort should re-enter France, and the madness of revenge and the atrocity of fanaticism should combine, God knows what would become of philosophy!

I join your majesty in regret for the death of the poor marquis. His literary merit cannot be estimated with greater justice than it has
been

been by your majesty, in what you have said concerning his works, and his style: but the tender and respectful attachment which I have continually seen him entertain, for your majesty, will always render his memory dear to me. He is freed from the ills of life; and, as Fontenelle said, from the difficulty of existence. I imagine I shall soon follow, for I feel myself sensibly weakened; and, without absolutely riding post to the next world, I continue my journey by short stages. M. de Mairan, like me a member both of the French academy and of the academy of sciences, is lately dead, at the age of ninety-three. I should be sorry to live so long, for I have no reason to hope old age would to me be equally mild, and healthy.

Voltaire drags on life, and writes still. That his mind should be capable of so much labour is very astonishing; but that your majesty should so long be equal to so many glorious and useful works is a recollection by which I am infinitely more interested. Letters in particular have more than ever need of you, and of that protection you afford. May this long be continued.

Such are the prayers I shall incessantly make, till the last breath of life: they do but express the sentiments of gratitude, admiration, and profound respect, with which, &c.

L E T T E R LXXVII.

From the King.

May 7, 1771.

IT is pity that the duke de Nivernois should deprive the public of his productions. The sciences never are so much encouraged as when, without blushing, they are cultivated by the great. The duke de Nivernois is at present the only person, among the first nobility, who unites knowledge and talents, at a time when the arts seem to have lost much of their respect in France. He might raise and redeem them from the vulgar. I am sorry his extreme circumspection should prevent him from thus encouraging the public. But each man should be free to act as he thinks proper; though it is usually affirmed that the virtues of Cenobites are of no benefit to society; and the same may be said of good works, which never see the light.

When I expose my sentiments, on our philosophical and metaphysical dissertations, to the Anaxagoras of the age, it is rather that I should gain information than that he should be refuted. The question I have ventured to examine is in itself so abstract that it escapes human research; and

and mistakes of such a kind are of no ill consequence. Let us console ourselves, my dear D'Alembert, by recollecting we are not alone condemned to remain ignorant of the Divine Nature. Were that ignorance the greatest of our misfortunes, we might to this be easily reconciled. I often recollect that the English poet says—

“ For action form'd will man pretend to think ?” *

I cannot describe how much I am amused by your countrymen. A nation so addicted to novelty is incessantly presenting me with new scenes. To-day the Jesuits are expelled; to-morrow confessional billets are in vogue; the next day the parliament is banished, and the Jesuits are recalled: not to mention that every three months the ministry is changed. France furnishes subject for conversation to all Europe. If Providence thought of me, while creating the world (supposing it to have done this act) Providence certainly formed these people for my recreation.

However I do not think the Jesuits will be recalled. The king imagines they are participators in the crime of Damiens, which is no rea-

* Not recollecting the line to which he alludes, I have translated the words of the king. T.

son why the kingdom should again be infected by such vermin. We must not look with too jaundiced an eye. Should the worst happen, does not Prussia offer you a ready asylum? Did not Descartes take refuge in Holland, and afterward in Sweden, to conceal himself from the persecutions of his countrymen? Would not Galileo have acted prudently to have fled from Italy, and to have escaped from the prisons in which he was detained by the Inquisition? The country of the philosopher is that in which he can be safe, and philosophise in repose. His native kingdom becomes inimical to him, as soon as he there suffers persecution.

I have seen the king of Sweden, as he passed through Prussia. He loves France, but quits it to ascend the throne. He is very amiable and well informed, but he will find sufficient to exercise his patience at home. Sweden is a terrible country to govern.

Alexis Orloff, the Lacedæmonian, who has made war in the Peloponnesus and the Mediterranean, has been here and left me a curious morsel, which he met with at Venice: may it contribute to your edification, and to that of the flock!

Rid yourself of the spleen, my dear D'Alembert. It is better for us to laugh than to weep

at

at the follies of mankind. Cherish cheerful ideas, and dissipate your gloom. If you wish to be merry, come hither. Such is my desire, and to this I exhort you. Here you will live in tranquillity and content.

L E T T E R LXXVIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, June 14, 1771.

THOSE philosophers who love to laugh, and laughing will not render them less philosophers, are much indebted to the abbé Nicolini, for having procured them the edificatory brief of God's earthly vicar, to the pontiff of his ambassador, Mahomet. Not that I am astonished at their present good intelligence: for, in my opinion, the Imans and the Muftis, of all sects, are better formed for mutual support than they are imagined to be. Their common end is to subjugate the poor human race, by superstition; and their chief difference is in the kind of bridle, with which they curb the animal. They may say to each other, like the physicians of Moliere —“ Let me vomit the patient, and you shall
“ bleed

“bleed him.” But I suspect the most reverend father in God, Ganganelli, keeps a secretary to draw out his briefs, who is more cunning than himself, and who mocks at what the cordelier Pope dictates. It is even asserted that this secretary is ready to play the Christian church a trick, by reconciling the heretical and the uncircumcised, who cut each others throats without knowing why. True it is, this ill trick to the Christian church would be a very good turn done to humanity; by whom the secretary will be blessed, and thanked, for not satisfying himself with making philosophers laugh, but who endeavours to dry up the tears of miserable multitudes.

Your majesty does that pleasant nation the French the honour to laugh at its expence, and to imagine it created for your recreation. Though a good Frenchman, I allow you have cause for your mirth. I know not whether good or ill will be the result of what is passing here, but I should be very much at ease should your majesty's prophecy be accomplished, relative to those vermin, the Jesuits; and if letters, philosophy, and the state should not have the misfortune to behold them here once more. I am not less interested on another subject. All that
7
should

should happen would be tolerably indifferent to me—

*Si de quelque argent frais nous avions le secours**;

As Crispin says in the comedy. But I fear it will be more difficult to recal the money into our purses than the Jesuits into the kingdom. For my own part, I have for these six months subsisted on your majesty's benefactions; and, instead of saying the *Benedicite* every day, my grace before meat is—May God preserve Frederic!

It must be owned, when we perceive the admirable manner in which this best of possible worlds is governed, we are exceedingly tempted to believe in Providence! Could I however recover my stomach, or procure sleep, half my evils would vanish; but my nights and days are destined to pass in almost equal gloom. Patience and resignation, to the will of Nature, are necessary. But, whether thinking, vegetating, dining, fasting, sleeping, or waking, there is one sentiment which never slumbers in my heart; the sentiment of eternal gratitude toward your majesty, of the admiration which I feel incessantly renewed, and of the profound respect with which, during life, I shall, &c.

* Had we but some ready money.

L E T T E R LXXIX.

From the King.

July 25, 1771.

I AM glad that the philosophers of Paris neither resemble * * *, who never laughs, nor the Rosinante of Don Quixote, that never galloped but once during life. The Pope, the Mufti, the Dervises, and the Monks are, in the present age, subjects for men's diversion; time has been when their presence excited men's groans. I know not whether the correspondence between God's vicegerent, at Rome, and the successor of Mahomet, at Constantinople, be well authenticated; but, if they did not write what is attributed to them, they ought so to have written. Their trade being the same, the sale of their drugs and rivalship only could render them enemies. The combatants of the crescent, and the warriors of the Hyperborean seas, are more difficult to be reconciled than priests; it is however to be hoped that some kind-hearted persons will re-establish peace between them.

Thus, you see, war is one of the ingredients which necessarily enters into the composition of
this

this wretched earth. From the year 1734, Europe has beheld one perpetual succession of wars: that of 1740, which continued to 1748; that of 1756, to 1763; and that between the Russians and Turks, which began in 1769, and which still rages. Spain has been on the point of breaking with England. In fine, ten years seldom pass away during which Europe is suffered to enjoy continual peace.

The French, who find consolation in a song, exclaim a little, when war obliges them to raise new taxes; but these, after a few witticisms, are forgotten. Thus, by a happy effect of levity, the inclination they have to be merry is stronger than all the reasons they find for affliction. A kingdom so rich as France is, with resources so immense that the depredations of multitudes of financiering banditti have not been able to exhaust its wealth, cannot want money; and the oldest king in christendom must possess more considerable treasures than ever were collected by Montezuma, or the Mogul emperors. I will therefore venture to suppose that the philosophers of Paris laugh at the inhabitants of the shores of the Baltic, when they mention the want of specie. We Prussians, Danes, and Swedes, are the beggars of Europe; savages, little better than barbarians, who
are

are half blind, and who awkwardly imitate the arts of polished nations. It was well said, by father Bouhours, that good sense might, possibly, but that wit could not, exist any where, except in France. You are in the country of El Dorado, where the rocks are gold, and the flints diamonds; yet, opulent as you are, you complain of not being in the celestial Jerusalem, which is still superior to the country of El Dorado.

Read the age of Louis XIV. and there behold how the arts have been honoured in France, and the decisive protection which was granted them, by this sovereign. Satirized as that age has been, you cannot but observe what care is at present taken that the present age should not, in turn, be satirized, by posterity. I humbly therefore request the great philosopher to condescend to teach me an entire new method to gain the approbation of all people, in all ages. He will greatly oblige me, by enlightening my Gothic ignorance, on a subject so interesting; and I assure him he shall enjoy the whole honour of the discovery.

I have read the fourth volume of the Encyclopedic questions, by Voltaire, among which I am very much surprised to find a fierce attack upon Maupertuis. There is something so cowardly

ardly in calumniating the dead, so unworthy in blackening the memory of men of merit, and something in this proceeding which denotes vengeance so implacable, so atrocious, that I almost repent of the statue that has been erected. How is it possible that so much genius can be allied to so much perversity ! I own it gives me great pain. You, who have a good heart, ought to remonstrate to Voltaire, concerning his conduct, which is more injurious to himself than to Maupertuis. I cannot but confess I am weary of continually finding the names of Maupertuis, Desfontaines, Freron, Le Franc de Pompignan, the poet Rousseau, and Abraham Chaumeix, in his works. Abuse so often repeated disgusts the reader, and too much unmasks the heart of Voltaire. This is mournful, not pleasant.

The poor Vandals of these districts salute the philosopher of modern Athens, the Anaxagoras of Paris, and recommend themselves to his protection, and his prayers. They entreat they may participate in his pious works, as, Vandals though they are, they participate in the prayers of the good Jesuits. By these means there can be no fear of Paradise. A geometri-
cian on one side, and a Jesuit on the other, if we do not travel fast then, when shall we ? Preserve your cheerfulness, laugh with Democritus,

enjoy life, keep yourself in good health, and be certain that no person is more interested in your welfare than the solitary Vandal of Sans Souci.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R LXXX.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, August 17, 1771.

THE letter your majesty did me the honour to write, in answer to my lamentations on the present state of the French finances, recalls to my mind the fable of the ant, that was well provided with all kinds of stores, and mocked the poor grasshopper for not being equally careful. A kingdom like France, say you, never can want money. Perhaps so: but, if the god Plutus have not entirely taken his leave of us, he has at least so carefully concealed himself that his retreat will with difficulty be discovered. The abbé Terrai, our comptroller general, is exerting himself in the search, but to no effect. I know not how far father Bouhours might be right when he pretended wit could only be found in France: but I recollect that formerly
a famous

a famous dancing master, named Marcel, pretended men could dance no where but in France. We may at present be told, in the words of the ant to the grasshopper,—“ Well, now go “ dance.”—And, as to the epigram of father Bouhours, be it true or false, I wish with Crispin that we had the philosophy to turn our wit into ready money. Your majesty perhaps will remember Moliere’s miser, while I thus repeat the word money ; but this does not increase my affliction ; nay, I even perceive a peculiar advantage, in the misfortune with which I am threatened, for I shall no longer have any thing to fear from indigestion. Oh ! ‘ Providence ! Providence ! All must own that “ whatever is “ is right ;” and, as St. Paul has told us, “ all “ things shall work together for our good.” King Alphonfus said, of that confusion of circles which ancient astronomers had imagined, that, had he been of the council of God, when he created the world, he could have given him some good advice : and I am occasionally tempted to believe, when my devotion is somewhat lukewarm, that God had as much want of advice, at least, in his creation of the moral as of the physical, world. I soon however reject the thought, when I recollect all the perfections of the moral world, the happiness which overflows the surface of

the earth, and the spirit of justice, of disinterestedness, and of truth, which reigns over the human species. It cannot be denied, sire, this earth is a most delicious abode, for a philosopher; who certainly must be vexed at being expelled, whether by hunger, indigestion, or the true believers, Russians or Mahometans, who are so worthily employed in mutual massacre.

Your majesty hopes "some kind-hearted persons will be found, who will re-establish peace between them." My first wish is for the accomplishment of this hope; but it remains to be asked, all things well considered, whether you are conferring any benefit on this unfortunate human race, when you prevent men from reciprocal destruction. This is an important point, worthy your majesty's consideration, and I am previously convinced you will act for the best; in order to do which the first thing necessary is to preserve yourself, for this is the greatest good that can accrue to humanity, or to philosophy.

It is your majesty's wish that I should write to Voltaire, as a philosopher, to induce him not to revile the dead, nor the living who are supposed dead, and who ought by him so to be supposed, when the little injury they are able to
do

do him is remembered. Alas! It is long since I took the liberty to give him this advice; and your majesty sees what has been the consequence. Who cannot but groan at the fate of mankind, when a single man is not permitted at once to possess perfect genius and perfect virtue! Though such permission might certainly be granted, were it only as some recompense to earth, overburthened as it is with so many men who have neither genius nor virtue. However, I shall make a new effort, according to the remonstrances of your majesty. I will represent to him that, as you say, a writer who is an honour to France is too great to maintain a petty war of bush-fighting with Pandours; that he is too just not to render to merit what to merit is due; that the greatest of men have need of indulgence, and render themselves worthy of indulgence by shewing it to others; that not only his private peace but his writings would profit by such conduct; and that expressions of hatred, which occur at each page, render them less interesting; since it may be nearly said of authors, as of comedians,

Que de leurs démêlés le public n'a que faire.*

Were I to add example to advice, and point

* The world has nothing to do with their disputes.

out the great men who have opposed satire by moderation and fame, I well know, first, what model I should propose for his imitation. But he perhaps would answer—this model is more easily admired than imitated: in which case I know not very well what I should reply.

I am, with the most profound respect, and gratitude which will only end with life, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXI.

From the King.

September 6, 1771.

SINCE you are so determined, I will believe that the fine kingdom of France is destitute of money. This supposed, I congratulate it on the prosperity which awaits it, in this world and the next. The sage legislator of Lacedæmon, Lycurgus, rendered his republic famous, by interdicting the admission of all metals, iron excepted. The French, according to this example, will become the most disinterested nation in Europe, the most attached to their country, the most virtuous and the most invincible. And what a still more happy prospect of futurity is

is presented! Paradise and eternal life, we well know, may not be enjoyed by the rich. Behold, my dear D'Alembert, what views of future bliss open on your countrymen! Some vile financiers, treasurers, archbishops, and people of their complexion excepted; who, too much the slaves of habit, and addicted to ancient usage, continue to collect, accumulate, and conceal their riches. I nevertheless cannot dissemble that, in my opinion, one single word will be sufficient to call back, into the kingdom, the same abundance of money which formerly was there found; and that single word is *credit*. Let this be re-established, and it will conjure up the treasures that have been buried, fearing lest they should be lost. Gold and silver would come into circulation, and philosophers would be paid, as mistresses I imagine are. This is at present a word of incantation more potent than certain expressions, which crazy people repeat, on certain occasions, before their ridiculous idols. Forgive me this scandalous comparison. It has escaped me *currente calamo*; and, being written, it shall not be effaced.

But do not imagine that you French are the only people who suffer, at present. In Germany, we experience worse evils than those occasioned among you, by the stagnation of money. We

have had two successive bad harvests. Provision had been made for the first year, but we are now taken unprovided; our granaries are exhausted, and our whole industry will scarcely perhaps suffice to feed the people, till the next year's harvest. Such is the destiny of mankind, in this best of possible worlds. My physical are added to your moral complaints; yet will they neither be more nor less.

I own, I greatly desire peace should be re-established, between people of the east and my barbarous neighbours, the Sarmatians; but I very much fear I shall not succeed. The Janseuists and Molinists might sooner be brought to agree, than a certain number of crowned heads could be put under one hat. But this might be overlooked, were not the fire progressive, and did it not, in its approach, emit some sparks on neighbouring buildings.

So much for the quarrels of despots. As to those of authors, you will perform a meritorious work in admonishing Voltaire, relative to the repeated and common-place abuse, which he heaps on Maupertuis, by whom it was not merited; and on other literary dwarfs, who by this means are drawn from that oblivion in which they probably would have crawled, to all eternity. From the conduct of Voltaire, I conclude
that,

that, were he a king, he would continually be at daggers drawn with his neighbours; his reign would be one perpetual war; and God knows then what arguments he would employ, to prove that war is the natural state of society, and that peace was not intended for man. The passions, ingenious to disguise themselves, often employ reason to plead their cause. We are unwilling to acknowledge ourselves in an error; and argument is called in, and tortured, that it may apparently authorise our conduct. Convinced of the mischiefs these passions occasion, should any atrabilarious doctor heat his imagination, and endeavour to extinguish them, he would but endeavour to hurry us into another extreme. The animated man would become a stupid automaton, a motionless being. For this reason, we must leave things as they are; procure bread, when it is scarce; unearth money, when it is necessary; cry in the market-place—*credit, credit*; permit those to make war who are determined not to be at peace; suffer self-called philosophers to print abuse; and satisfy ourselves with preserving our own house in tranquillity.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, November 8, 1771.

BY the last letter your majesty has done me the honour to write, I perceive mankind are not much more happy in the north than in the south of our poor Europe. In your preceding letter, your provident philosophy indulged a little ridicule on the embarrassment which our follies have occasioned; and I took the liberty to compare what you said to the ant, that mocked the grasshopper. But at present, thanks to Divine Providence, by which all things are so well conducted, from the Pyrenees to the Frozen Sea all are grasshoppers. Did I not entertain that profound respect for this Holy Providence which it merits, I own I should be rather out of humour with its proceedings; and I am almost certain your majesty would be the same; for, if we might have foreseen and impeded a part of our actual disaster, in France, it cannot be so affirmed of your majesty. And here I recollect what that said famous dancing-master, named Marcel, said to a lady, one of his scholars, who turned in her toes—"Madam,"
said

said he, pointing to a crucifix which stood in her chamber, “ your legs are as ill put on as those of this figure ; though I must own that, as to the latter, it is not his fault.”

But here, fire, let us leave both grasshoppers and crucifixes. Your majesty supposes that, if we would get out of the dirt, we must cry in the market-place—*Credit re established*. But it seems to me we ought first to cry *economy* ; without which, the first exclamation might be answered as merchants answer those who ask for money—*Credit is extinct*. But I believe it would be more difficult efficaciously to cry *economy*, to our depredators, than moderation, to Voltaire. I seldom write to him without exhorting him to despise the grubs he crushes, and to spare the men of merit whom he vilifies. Yet your majesty perceives how much he profits by my remonstrances. We must determine to leave men and things as they are, and not say like Pope—“ Whatever is is right”—but, “ What ever is cannot be otherwise.” Literature however has more need than ever to respect itself, since in my opinion its state is less than ever favourable. Nay I think that, almost over all Europe, there is a great propensity to oppress letters. I am told that it is here intended to suppress the royal college, founded by Francis I,

the

the father of literature. The motive cannot be expence, for I doubt whether it costs twenty thousand livres (eight hundred pounds) per annum, for the support of the professors. Perhaps it is intended to starve in order to silence philosophy; in which case the expedient is well imagined. Philosophy must be allowed to have done kings great services, if it were only in destroying that superstition which rendered them the slaves of priests. But the field is tilled, the oxen that drive the plough no more are wanted, and there is no more care taken to give them fodder. I have set my shoulder to the yoke, to the best of my abilities, and with what strength I had. Your majesty has been pleased to regard my exertions with kindness, and to you am I indebted for the first recompense I received for my labours. Still more, I am indebted to you for my present subsistence; thanks to the benefactions you were pleased to honour me with last year. This my œconomy shall manage as long as possible, and I will, without hesitating, have recourse to the same benefactor, when my funds are exhausted.

I have at present another favour to request, from your majesty; which is that you would please to cause researches to be made, in the library of Magdeburg, if that library which existed

isted in the last age have not been transported elsewhere, for a work of Pliny the naturalist, which it is pretended is there to be found. I greatly doubt the truth of this anecdote. I should weary your majesty, were I to relate the reasons on which I found my suspicions; but the object however is of sufficient importance to induce an effectual enquiry to be made, into its truth. The question relates to *a history, in twenty books, of the wars of the Romans, against the various nations of Germany*. Literature, which already has so many obligations to your majesty, will have another, should you be pleased to give your commands that the fact may be verified, and that we may at last be certain there is no such precious manuscript in existence; as there is but too much reason to believe.

While entreating your majesty to be pleased to enquire into this anecdote, I shall take the liberty to relate another. In the month of January, at a village named Vitry, near Paris, a woman who had lived in obscurity, and even poverty, died. This woman, it is asserted, was the widow of the czarowitz, Alexis, who was put to death by his father, the czar Peter I. If this be truth, the woman must have been the sister-in-law to the late emperor, Charles VI, whose wife was of the house of Wolfenbottle, as was the wife
 I of

of the czarowitz. The latter, it was rumoured at the time, died of a kick, which her husband gave her in the belly, when she was in a state of pregnancy. But it is now pretended a billet was buried in her stead; that she fled from Russia; that she went to Louisiana, and from thence to the isle of France; and that she there married an officer, named Maldack, whose name she bore till her death. Various combining circumstances, which united form tolerably strong proofs, appear to demonstrate that this woman was really the widow of prince Alexis. It seems certain that she received a pension from the court of Brunswick; and by this means perhaps your majesty may gain farther information.

I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXIII.

From the King.

November 30, 1771.

I BELIEVE the gods have reserved for themselves that happiness the appearance of which they have bestowed on man, and of which we are continually yet ineffectually in search.

But, although we are deprived of perfect felicity, we in return possess many consolations which remove a number of our evils. The first is hope; and the second a fund of native cheerfulness; which you French folks especially possess, in a supreme degree. A song, or an excellent repartee, will dissipate your cares. If there be a dearth, Providence has its couplet. If taxes increase, woe to the tax-gatherers whose names may be brought in rhyme. Thus you always find consolation. You act rationally, and I declare myself of your party. It is ridiculous to afflict ourselves for temporary events, the essence of which is instability. While Heraclitus weeps at them, Democritus laughs. Let us laugh, likewise, my dear D'Alembert; you at your finances, and I at the present dearth, at my gout, &c. &c. This is the way in which I am determined to act, and have reason to be satisfied. Scarcely was I freed from excess of pain before I diverted myself on the subject of the Confederates of Poland. I find amusement in painting them as they are. I here send you some cantos of a poem which I will not say is good. It was a remedy which, by diverting my thoughts, suspended pain. May it cure you of your vapours; may you for a few moments forget your embarrassments, and remember,

ber, while reading, that you read the verses of a man in the gout, and who has passed the fixtieth year of his age.

You tell me of the little honour in which literature is at present held in France. I cannot think the complaint is general throughout Europe; but you will grant me that many men of letters, by their conduct, authorise the want of esteem in which they live. The majority of mankind, who do not reflect, confound the character and the genius of the artist; and, while they despise his morals, they also condemn his art. It is supposed, since knowledge neither corrects the character of the learned nor renders them more meek, that a great number of them turn their knowledge to abuse; that to be learned is useless; that an enlightened mind is only conducive to ostentation; and that, since no advantage is derived from science, it is useless to society. This reasoning is mathematically false; for, were we to condemn all good institutions because of the abuses which mankind commit, not one would remain. What would you have men think, when they see works, by the same author, that are contradictory to each other; when they discriminate between that which his pen has freely written, and that which he has scribbled from venal motives; when in-

famous

famous libels appear against government; when shameless cynics carp and bite, indifferently, at all they meet; and when, in philosophic works, the abominable maxims again are found of John Petit*, Bussembaum, and Malagrida? Is it for lovers of wisdom to encourage crimes? Remembering the guilt of Damiens, ought not such men to be circumspect, lest they should inflame some overheated imagination, by infernal maxims, which may induce them to commit the most atrocious acts? Had Virgil, Cicero, Varro, and Horace been guilty of such acts, they never would have enjoyed that fame in Rome which still is paid to their memory. To render literature respectable, not only genius but morality is especially necessary. But the trade is become too common; it is practised by too many tyros, who bring it into discredit.

* John Petit by no means merits to be ranked with these two detestable Jesuits. Be his motives for defending the duke of Burgundy (who under Charles VI. of France had caused Louis the dauphin to be murdered) what they may, nothing can be more wholesome than the doctrine for which he has been so much decried. He asserted that all means were good to rid the world of a tyrant, and that the man who should murder him would not only deserve to escape punishment but would merit reward. If society itself have not virtue enough to rid itself of a tyrant, nothing can be more heroic than such an act; taking care that his tyranny be real, and not imaginary. T.

With respect to yourself, I am glad to perceive the confidence you place in me : nor shall you be deceived ; though the ruinous state of the finances of a monarch whose revenues amount to four hundred millions (sixteen millions and a half sterling) appears to me very strange.

You wish to enquire concerning the manuscript of Pliny the naturalist, relative to the wars of the Germans, said to be at Madgeburg. Though I have not yet received any answer, I believe it to be the tale of a traveller ; for you may rest persuaded, did any such manuscript exist, it would be known. Neither I nor any of the learned here have ever heard it mentioned.

I can answer with more precision, concerning the lady, who pretended to pass for the widow of the czarowitz. Her imposition has been discovered at Brunswick, whither she went, soon after the death of the lady whose name she borrowed. She received charity there, with an order to quit the country, and never to assume a name from which she was by birth so distant. I would have you believe that the Russians know how effectually to kill ; and that, when they expedite any one to the other world, especially at court, we never hear of a resurrection. The reverse might happen among us ; we are not sufficiently practised in the trade. I would therefore

therefore have you ask, when you meet with any one who has thus risen again—"Pray, sir, or "madam, where did you happen to be killed?" You will judge of the veracity of the answer by the country which shall be named: If Judea be the place, you know that resurrection was there practised. Should Prussia be mentioned, I would have you doubt; and, if it be Russia, do not believe a syllable of the matter. And here ends my excellent dissertation, worthy of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres.

A propos of academies. I have met with some works in which there is no lack of praise, on the French, written by candidates for places in the French academy, and who by such means have been successful. I have determined to enter the lists; and, that I may be elected one of your forty babblers, I propose to myself to write an apology for some of the campaigns of your generals, in the last war. The work will soon be finished, and I shall dedicate it to national vanity; consequently I suppose I shall soon become your brother academician.

Enough for the present; if you wish me to prattle more, you need but provoke me, by a new letter.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXIV.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, January 2, 1772.

I FEAR your majesty will suppose me at least an attorney, or something worse, from the liberty I have taken to send you so many papers, with this letter. But, before I relate the purpose of these papers, I ought to begin by an object beyond comparison more interesting to me : I mean, sire, the very humble thanks which I am indebted to your majesty, for the charming verses you have done me the honour to send me, and for the extreme pleasure I received from reading these verses. The epistle of your majesty, to the queen of Sweden, abounds in philosophy and feeling : it is also very forcible against the detractors of kings, who ought to be respected, even when they err. The poem on the Confederates is a very agreeable work, full of imagination, of incident, and especially of humour, which was no easy thing, the gloominess of the subject considered.

There is, among various passages of the poem which deserve to be remembered, a line concerning which I request an explanation, from your majesty. Is the picture of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, at the palace of the bishop of Kiow,
a histori-

a historical fact, or only a probable fiction, consistent with the sentiments of the prelate, and similar to those in which the poets indulge?

I am acquainted with some philosophers who have pity on these poor Confederates, and whom they really suppose to be fighting for their freedom. Did they know that the whole library of the prelate, who is one of their chiefs, consists only of such a picture, I have no doubt but they would then say, as the friend of La Brinvilliers did, who was informed that she had poisoned her father—"Indeed!—That is not so well as "I could have wished*."

However, sire, I am very desirous of, and wait with the greatest impatience for, the continuation of the poem, of which I entreat your majesty not to deprive me. My most ardent wish is that the title of the last canto may be PEACE CONFERRED, BY FREDERIC THE GREAT, ON THE CONFEDERATES AND DISSENTS; THE TURKS AND RUSSIANS; EUROPE AND ASIA. Your majesty will then resemble the judge who, sending for the parties, began by ridiculing their cause of quarrel, and ended by inducing them to shake hands, and depart friends.

* *Si cela est, j'en rabats beaucoup.* Literally—If that be so, I shall make great abatement.

This, sire, is what humanity hopes from you, And, however difficult such reconciliation may be, it is perhaps less so than the re-establishment of our finances; ruined as they are, by thirty years of war, by rapine, and by destructive operations. Nor is our poor republic of letters in much better repair; and I am sorry that your majesty has reason to accuse my brethren of so many errors. I wish the just and sage reflections which your majesty has done me the honour to write, on this subject, were printed and pasted on the doors of all men of letters. With respect to my poor self, I have at least endeavoured to make my conduct conform, as much as possible, to principles so true and so certain; and thus to merit the bounties with which I have been honoured, by your majesty.

I now come, sire, to the two annexed papers. The title of the first is the history of madame de Maldack, and it contains the anecdotes, true or false, which I have been able to collect, concerning this pretended widow of the czarowitz. I find no difficulty to believe the whole story to be an imposition; but perhaps your majesty will not be sorry to know what has been reported in France, on the subject, during the life and after the death of that woman. This memorial was sent me by a person who had a country house in the village in which she lived; and
perhaps

perhaps the court of Brunswick, which had the goodness to grant her a small pension, and the court of Russia, will be somewhat astonished at the particulars, and the tale, which this female adventurer has thought proper to relate.

The other paper is an article intended for the gazette of the Lower Rhine, in which, first, a family in every respect worthy, and with which I have long lived in friendship, is interested. It has pleased the editor of the gazette at Cleves, in your majesty's states, or as your majesty pleasantly calls him that post-boy, who follows fame (not to mention that this post-boy winds nothing better than a cow's horn) it has pleased I say this paragraph writer, in No 88, to insert an article injurious to the family, relative to the death of a relation, a man of merit, lately deceased. The family implores your majesty's protection; not to punish the wretch, whom they pardon, but to send the annexed retractation, with a command to insert it immediately, in his gazette, without the alteration of a syllable, and with a prohibition henceforth to speak, good or ill, of that family, or any of its branches. As my friends are acquainted with your majesty's goodness to me, they have entreated me to lay their prayers at your majesty's feet; of which duty I acquit myself with eagerness and zeal, because I am very earnestly desirous of obliging them. I therefore

most humbly entreat and conjure your majesty to be pleased to issue your orders, for the satisfaction of this worthy and respectable family.

I scarcely have room to request your majesty would inform me if the history of Germany, by Pliny, be found at Magdeburg; which I, like you, cannot suppose; and to wish that the coming year may be as glorious to your majesty as all the past. In these sentiments of profound respect, eternal gratitude, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXV.

From the King.

January 26, 1772.

BY your answer, I perceive there are many objects which improve by being seen at a distance; and of this number the Confederates of Poland well may be. We who are the neighbours of these savage people, and who are acquainted with individuals and the chiefs of parties, think them worthy of nothing but hisses. The confederation has been formed by fanaticism. The chiefs are all divided among themselves, and each has his views, and different projects. They act with imprudence, fight with
cowardice,

cowardice, and are only capable of such kind of crimes as cowards can commit. Had I a bishop Turpin, or an abbot Trithemius at my disposal, I should willingly cite his authority; but, as no person in Poland has learned to write, I am obliged to depend on my own, for the facts which I have related in the poem; and, as mathematical demonstration was not in question, it seemed to me I was at liberty to indulge my fancy. I will not answer that the bishop of Kiow really had a picture of the massacre of St. Bartholomew at his residence. Henry III. was present at this holy butchery; he might have had it painted, and have given the picture to the then bishop of Kiow, as a proof that he himself was orthodox; and it might have descended from that bishop to the present, who could not be better pleased, had he the power, than by exciting a similar massacre, in his own country.

By the conspiracy which these wretches had projected against their king, you may perceive of how much their phrenzy is capable. Their cause of hatred against their sovereign is that he is not sufficiently rich, to bestow pensions equal to their avarice. They would prefer a foreign prince, who could gratify their profusion from his hereditary domains. I pity philosophers that interest themselves concerning this people, who

are

are in every respect contemptible. Their only excuse is their ignorance. Poland has no laws ; nor does it enjoy what is called liberty, but its government has degenerated into licentious anarchy. Its lords exercise the most cruel tyranny over their slaves. In a word, of all the governments of Europe, that of Turkey excepted, it is the worst.

I inclose two cantos of the same poem, in this letter, and they will have some merit, should they conduce to remove the spleen of those by whom they may be read.

You suppose that peace may be made, between inimical powers, with as much facility as bad poetry ; yet would I sooner undertake to turn the whole Jewish history into madrigals, than to inspire three sovereigns, two of whom are women, with the same sentiments. Still I am not discouraged, nor will it be my fault, should not peace be concluded with all the speed I desire. When your neighbour's house is on fire, extinguish the conflagration, lest the flame should reach your own. Thus does the fifteenth Louis act. But for his infinite assiduity, Spain and England would now be at war, in the four quarters of the known world. Each year that peace is prolonged ought to re-establish his finances. A kingdom like France is inexhaustible in resources ; and there must be very ill manage-

management, if its debts cannot be paid, with a revenue of four hundred millions of livres. (Sixteen millions and a half sterling.) Your academies will soon grow rich, and your academicians will roll in wealth.

Poor Helvetius will no longer roll on any thing! I heard of his death with infinite grief; his character appeared to me admirable. It were perhaps to have been desired that he had consulted his mind less, and his heart more. I imagine some posthumous works by him will appear. It is rumoured that he has left a poem on happiness, of which I hear a good character. I will read it should it be printed.

The work of Pliny, which it has been pretended was at Magdeburg, cannot be found. It is said the manuscript is at Augsburg; but these are vain reports: no such work apparently exists.

The history of madame de Maldack, the self-called czarowitzina, is equally false. It appears to me that she was one of the wardrobe-women of the princess whose name she assumed. Her history is one chain of falsehoods. The countess of Kœnigsmark never set foot in Russia; nor did marshal Saxe ever see the wife of the czarowitz; he therefore could not discover her in madame de Maldack. It should particularly be remarked that, had a princess as
she

she pretends to have been, by miracle escaped from Russia, she would have sought a natural asylum in the bosom of her family, and not have become an adventurer, like the creature of whom you speak. She might have borne some resemblance to her mistress; and on this her imposition was founded, that she might obtain some consideration. But she took good care not to appear at Brunswick, because the czarowitzina was too well known, by her family, for her relations to be abused by a vague resemblance, or by a tale which would have betrayed her deceit.

You have given me charge of another commission, which is to me more embarrassing; especially as I am neither a corrector of the press, nor a censor of gazettes. I imagine the family of Loiseau de Mauléon went to school with Franc de Pompignan, and that it supposes the eyes of all Europe fixed upon, and the whole world employed concerning, this family. For my own part, I who live in Germany and know what passes there, can on my honour assure the family of Mauléon that there are very few people who know such a family exists; and that those who are best acquainted with it are perhaps some forty persons, who have read the case which that advocate drew up in favour of

Calas.

Calas. I can solemnly assure you that not a man in Germany opposes the nobility of that family; that it is wholly indifferent to the diet of Ratisbon, whether the advocate died of a polypus at the heart or a spitting of blood; whether the dukes of Orleans did or did not consult his father; and, in fine, this diet is well satisfied that the advocates of Paris, the court of aids, the tournelle, the grand chamber, the presidents à mortier, and the chancellor should live or die, when and how they please. Germany gives her promise to remain in equal ignorance.

With respect to the gazette editor of the Lower Rhine, the family of Mauléon must be satisfied that he remains undisturbed; remembering that, if the liberty of the press be not indulged, the mind of man must remain in darkness: and all the encyclopedists, of whom I am a zealous disciple, exclaim against the office of censor, and insist that each man has a right to explain and print his thoughts.

Administer this, as a cooling powder, to the family of the advocate, which affords symptoms of inflammatory fever, and which disease it will be good to prevent by phlebotomy, and frequent emulsions. How many people are there, my good D'Alembert, who only see objects
 5 through

through those great telescopes with which the satellites of Saturn are observed ! Their eyes ought for a time to be reduced to a microscopic regimen*, that they might learn better to estimate the size of objects, and if possible of themselves. But I have said too much for this time.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXVI.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, March 3, 1772.

THE letter your majesty has done me the honour to write, dated January 26, I did not receive till the 21st of the last month ; for, your majesty having unfortunately been attacked by the gout, you were during three weeks unable to sign the letter. I should immediately have replied, had I not myself been attacked, at the time when it came to hand, by a kind of gout in the head ; or more properly speaking by the rheumatism, which equally prevented sleep and application.

* The king seems to have forgotten that the microscope, like the telescope, magnifies objects ; and that its use is to render small things apparently great. T.

The

The charming poetry your majesty had the goodness to send me was ill calculated to cure my want of sleep. The two new cantos do not seem to me inferior to the two former. I was particularly delighted by the picture of the catholic church, in the third; and by the alliance which thence resulted, between the most catholic Confederates and the most christian Mustapha; and, in the fourth, the deliverance which the blessed Virgin Mary procures the Confederates, when besieged, by petitioning her son, is imagined with true poetic pleasantry. I am particularly pleased, in the work, to find that imagination never leads reason astray; that they never were in any place better friends; and that your majesty has the art every where to conform to the precept of Horace, and to mingle the useful and the agreeable.

I know not what my brother philosophers may think of the Confederates. I can well believe that they have lost nothing, by having been seen at a distance; but if these Confederates complain, wright or wrong, of being oppressed by Russia, I likewise hear a hundred thousand peasants, and more, who do or may complain, not wrongfully but with very good cause, of having been from time immemorial oppressed by these same Confederates; and,

while the latter shall remain oppressors, I only compare their enemy to a master, who bestows on his valet de chambre those kicks which the valet returns to the scullion.

Such is the picture which my imagination draws of the present state of Poland ; nor am I surpris'd that your majesty should endeavour to prevent, if possible, the war from spreading ; and those ills, with which this unfortunate country is already overwhelmed, from being increased. These projects and these views are well worthy the soul of your majesty. I know more ; I know you have made proposals, to a great power in Europe, to become a mediator ; and I wish, for a thousand reasons, that the respectable efforts of your majesty might be successful. But I shall abstain as I ought from penetrating into the counsel and intentions of kings ; and shall satisfy myself with petitioning, at the gates of their palaces, that wisdom and the love of humanity may be seated, with them, on the throne. Should there be any place of retreat for the ghosts of sages, I have no doubt but that poor Helvetius, be he where he will, offers up prayers, similar to those of your majesty and mine, for the peace and prosperity of the wretched human race. I deeply regret the loss of this worthy, amiable, and virtuous philosopher ; who to the respectable

able

able qualities which rendered him dear to me, added one which more particularly attached him to my affections; and this was the sentiments of respect and admiration with which his heart overflowed for your majesty. How often have you been the subject of our conversation! How often while speaking of you have our hearts glowed, and melted with mutual tenderness! How often have we delighted to repeat the obligations, of every kind, which letters and philosophy have to you, in this unfortunate age!

I expected, sire, that the pretended work of Pliny was a chimæra. Nor could I doubt of the deception of the wardrobe woman, who assumed the name of her mistress, the wife of the czarowitz. Neither will I further insist on what relates to the family of Mauléon, for I respect your majesty's manner of thinking on this subject. Not but I should have been better pleased if, instead of ridiculing the poor Encyclopedists for their wishes, real or pretended, in favour of the liberty of the press, you had been kind enough to have afforded me some information, and acquainted me with what your thoughts on this great question are. To induce you so to do, I could almost venture to hazard some reflexions myself, on the subject. I know not whether it be a liberty that ought to be granted,

but think that, if it be, it ought to be indefinite, and unlimited. For why should any one be permitted rather to insult an honest citizen, to tell him he is a knave, or if you please the son of a footman, than to tell the man in office he is a thief, a fool, or a tyrant? In a word, if personal satire be permitted, which I think ought not to be, I know not why it should be confined to the feeble, and the little; and why the strong, and the great, should not have their share.

But I believe, in all well-regulated states, whether monarchical or republican, this kind of satire ought to be prohibited, from the lowest to the most exalted ranks in society: for in fine all the citizens have an equal right to protection, and the preservation of that moral existence of which they are, or are endeavoured to be, deprived by satire.

With respect to works of every kind, whether literary, philosophic, or political, I think men should have free liberty to write on such subjects; and even to blame, provided that satire should have no part in them: for, once again, the end of the liberty of the press should be to enlighten, and not to offend. But it is time for me to check the liberty of my pen, and I conclude with wishing your majesty full deliverance from gout and war, and by renewing the assurances

ances of admiration, eternal gratitude, and profound respect, with which I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXVII.

From the King.

April 7, 1772.

I KNOW not what accident continually happens to throw impediments in my way, whenever I mean to answer your letters. Lately the gout confined me to my couch, and now the visit of the queen dowager of Sweden, and the dutchess of Brunswick, has prevented me from writing to you. But you have suffered no great loss; on the contrary, you have avoided assassination by a vile collection of rhimes; I send you another canto of the poem. I hope that, full of narcotic virtue, it will supply the want of those poppies which Morpheus refuses to bestow. We Germans, as good father Bouhours has well said, are but ill adapted to poetry, and especially to epic poetry; we only possess the heavy instinct of good sense, and our Pegasus has no wings. I must answer you as Van Haren did Voltaire, who praised him for

his poem of Leonidas—"My verses are good," said he, "for I have no imagination."

Helvetius it is said has left a poem on Happiness, among his papers. Let me request you to enquire. I confess I should be glad to possess it, if there be nothing imprudent in such a wish. I have much regretted this philosopher, who has afforded marks of being peculiarly disinterested, and whose heart was as pure as his mind was easily led astray. But philosophers are not less subject to the eternal laws of nature than other men; who, wise or foolish, great or small, are equally obliged to pay Nature's debt; or rather to restore what she for a time has lent.

It is very probable that the good Helvetius no longer reads gazettes, nor ecclesiastical intelligence; and that consequently he does not trouble himself much concerning the wars of the Confederates, or the Turks. Should however any of the news-writers of Paris send their gazettes into the country where he is, they may inform him that these troubles are soon to be appeased, and that a general peace will close the wounds which past calamities have made; and they may add that the Confederates no doubt will remain cuckolds, beaten, and contented*. The news-writers will be the only

* *Cocu, battu, et content.*—The title of a French comedy by Raimond Poisson. T.

people who will be dissatisfied, to see an end to the war, for there will be then an end to their babbling, and conjectures, which they at a venture make, and of the false intelligence which they publish to-day, that they may contradict it to-morrow.

Such is my confession of faith, relative to gazette writers, and in answer to what you have asked. But, if you wish to know what I think of the liberty of the press, and of those satirical works which are the inevitable consequence, I will own to you, without intending however to shock the gentlemen Encyclopedists, whom I respect, that, knowing men as I do, from tolerably long experience, I am well persuaded they stand in need of physick, and that they will continually abuse the freedom they enjoy; so that in what relates to books, their works ought to be subject to examination; not rigorously made, but in such a manner however as to suppress whatever shall be discovered contrary to the public tranquillity, because satire is injurious to the good of society. But, at the same time, I will not dissemble that I think it very ridiculous for the family of a petty advocate formally to complain of a genealogical affront. Your advocate, or his relations, ought rather to rejoice that Loiseau de Mauléon is treated like the

grandees of the earth, whose genealogies are equally inaccurate. If however this distressed family must have satisfaction, we can find men of erudition, in Germany, who will show that the defunct is a descendant, in a right line, from the ancient kings of Leon and Castile; and I dare venture to promise that this excellent discovery shall be inserted in the courier of the Lower Rhine. This is all I shall be able to effect for the reconciliation of these two illustrious parties. Nor shall I be a little vain of the act: I will insert in my memoirs that, having contributed to pacify the troubles of Poland and Turkey, I was likewise so highly favoured, by fortune, as to be successful in establishing peace between Mauléon and the courier of the Lower Rhine. After this, my dear Anaxagoras, I hope your philosophy will be satisfied with mine. I labour all in my power to conciliate the minds of men. I propose expedients, and I hope the family of Mauléon will not be more intractable than the grand signor, and his divan. Provided with full powers, you may sign this important act for the welfare of Europe, and thus restore to the courier of the Lower Rhine all the tranquillity and freedom of mind of which he stands in need, for the circulation of his ribaldry.

After

After having discussed affairs of such magnitude, I can only offer up prayers for your preservation, recal to your mind the small philosophic flock that is to be found on the shores of the Baltic, and assure you of my personal esteem.

On which I pray, &c.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, May 16, 1772.

PERMIT me to begin my letter by a compliment, which I think due to your majesty, on the success of a man of science, whom your goodness has made known to Europe, and the glory of whose success is attributed to your academy, in which you have been pleased to give him a distinguished seat. This is the fourth or fifth time that M. de la Grange, with the greatest and best merited eulogium, has obtained the prize of our academy of sciences; and I believe I may venture to announce, to your majesty, that he will in a few days, be elected a foreign associate of our academy. To be an associate is

very honourable, for the associates are very few. The distinction is eagerly fought after, and only obtained by the most celebrated of the literati of Europe; and that generally in their old age, whereas I believe that M. de la Grange is at present but five and thirty. I daily rejoice, more and more, that I was so fortunate as to procure your academy a philosopher who is so estimable for his uncommon talents, his profound knowledge, and his prudent and disinterested character. I have no doubt your majesty will be pleased to acquaint him with your satisfaction. This hope is founded on the esteem which your majesty has continually entertained for him, as you have more than once done me the honour to inform me, and on the excellent discourse which you have lately read to your academy, and which you have had the goodness to send me. This discourse, sire, I had previously read in a literary gazette, which is printed at Deux Ponts, and had admired the sound philosophy it contains, the just views it presents, worthy of a great king, the eloquence with which it is written, and the thunder which your majesty hurls against those empirics, sacred and profane, and teachers of error, who are paid to brutalize human nature; and likewise against detractors of the sciences, another species of empirics

pirics and hypocrites, as contemptible as the former.

Nor have I read the fifth canto of the poem, against the Confederates, with less pleasure and admiration. Yet perhaps I ought to entreat mercy of your majesty for my poor countrymen the Gauls, whose fame and exploits, at Rosbach, Crevelt, and elsewhere, you have so pleasantly celebrated. But, sire, the part of that fame, or that shame, which appertains to me is so small that I lay no claim to it, but grant it, with all its honours, to any person who shall think it worthy their acceptance. As I have not the advantage nor the misfortune to be either a minister or a general, I shall leave them to enjoy their renown in peace. I neither ask a part in the laurels they gather, nor in the scourges they may receive; and, happen what may, I shall never say to them—"I cry halves"—like our street-beggars, when one of their own order is raking a rag out of the channel.

Yet, sire, I will confess, the pleasure I receive from your verse and prose, however great it may be, is not more lively than that which I feel at one passage in the letter, which your majesty has done me the honour to write to me, and in which you announce the approach of peace. This great act will be attributed to your majesty by all Europe;

rope; nor will it be the least glorious circumstance of your life.

The poem of poor Helvetius, on Happiness, was left imperfect. It is however affirmed that it will be printed, even in its state of imperfection; and indeed I hear it is now in the press, in Holland; the truth of which your majesty may easily learn.

It is now a month, sire, since I acquired a new office. I am appointed secretary to the French academy; a place which rather demands assiduity than labour. Its emoluments are trifling, and the disgust and disagreeable circumstances attending it, when literature is more than ever oppressed and persecuted, in France, are sufficiently great. I will not trouble your majesty with a detail of the vexations, of every kind, which philosophy and literature suffer; since, not being able to afford any remedy, the narrative would but afflict you. You can but protect the arts and sciences in your own kingdom, weep at their destiny in other parts, and by your lessons and your example encourage those who cultivate them. And why should sages complain? They will read that charming passage, which begins the fifth canto of your poem, on the misfortunes common to all kingdoms; they will
cast

cast their eyes on furrounding objects, and will repeat this beautiful line of your majesty's—

C'est même joie et ce sont mêmes pleurs.*

I am, with every sentiment of profound respect, gratitude, and admiration, which will end only with life, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXIX.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, June 1, 1772.

A YOUNG officer, full of ardour, and possessed of knowledge and understanding, whose name is M. de Guibert, desires to lay that homage at your majesty's feet which all military men, and all philosophers, owe you. He entreats your majesty would kindly receive the work which accompanies this, and of which he is the author; and, as he knows the bounty with which your majesty honours me, he has entreated me to present you his book, and his profound respects.

Quintilian says, the progress made in eloquence ought to be estimated by the pleasure

* Thus grief and joy are every where the same.

received in the reading of Cicero. Were we to judge of the progress made in the military art by a like rule, I have reason to believe, sire, that the progress of M. de Guibert is great, from the profound admiration with which he is penetrated for the genius which your majesty has imparted to that necessary but fatal art. But of this the Cæsar of our age must judge; and, should he think the work worthy of any estimation, the author will be highly delighted with the praise Cæsar shall please to bestow, which will be the noblest recompense his labour can receive.

The Academy of Sciences, at Paris, has elected M. de la Grange a foreign associate, as I have previously announced to your majesty. He was indebted for a unanimity of votes to his own superior merit, and at the same time to the assurance I gave my fellow academicians that they would perform an act agreeable to your majesty, whose name is so dear, so precious, to the sciences, by the protection you grant them, and the knowledge with which they are enriched by you.

Europe hopes that your majesty will not rest satisfied with instructing her, but that you will procure her peace. As I have no doubt of your majesty's great influence, in the treaty between

the Porte and Russia, I take the liberty to recommend one object, which I continually have at heart; and that is to obtain, from Sultan Mustapha, the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem, that the Sorbonne may be embarrassed, and philosophy find recreation. Yet I still more ardently desire that the Being, whatever he may be, who presides over the universe, should long preserve your majesty for the good of that poor philosophy which is persecuted, or vilified, almost every where, except in your states.

I am, with the utmost respect, &c.

LETTER XC.

From the King.

June 20, 1772.

I BEGIN by congratulating you on your new academical dignity, which proves that merit still meets reward in France, and that the nation can discern those whose great talents are worthy of recompense. You know that Apollo promises his disciples nothing more than a few sprigs of laurel, and praise. These you at present enjoy, in the most celebrated academy of Europe,

Europe, whence you distribute honours on great men, and such as distinguish themselves among foreign nations. I am glad to see our La Grange one of the number. I am too ignorant of the mathematics to judge of his scientific merit, but I have sufficient knowledge to do justice to his character, which is mild and modest.

The approbation you bestow on the short academical discourse, read in the presence of the queen of Sweden, renders it supportable to me : for, in reality, such subjects are worn threadbare. Every hearer divines what can be said ; all that I could do was to present the picture under another point of view, relative to the good of the state. My success will surpass my hopes, should this attempt awaken, in the minds of readers, the love of the sciences, and a taste for the fine arts ; but I can expect no such miracles. Provided this taste be promoted in Prussia, and all my efforts are that it should be, I ought to be satisfied. The sciences are travellers ; they have been in Greece, Italy, France, and England. And why should they not make some stay in Prussia ? This may be hoped, and the very supposition gives me great pleasure.

Do you know that you have made me very proud ? What ! One of the forty of the French academy cite my Teutonic poetry ! I really be-

gin to believe myself a poet; and, as soon as that peace which you do me the honour to attribute to me shall be concluded, I will send you the sixth canto.

I have written to Holland, to obtain the posthumous works of poor Helvetius, but have not received any answer. I imagine the work is not yet come from the press. He was a worthy man, and I shall read his works again with pleasure.

I am to have grand company in a few days. The queen of Sweden is coming here, with a part of her family, and I shall have *Phedra* and *Mahomet* performed, for her entertainment. The actors who are to play these tragedies are but just arrived, I cannot therefore judge of their talents.

We have just lost *Touffaint*, and I am in want of a good rhetorician in his place. I have thought of *De Lille*, the translator of *Virgil*, to whom I beg you will make the proposal. Should he refuse, I entreat you would mention some other person of merit, and who may become eminent in the belles lettres, as a member of our academy. I send you commissions, but who is more capable of executing them than yourself? For which reason I shall be glad if you will take this trouble.

On which I pray, &c.

LET.

L E T T E R XCI.

From the King.

July 23, 1772.

I DID not expect to receive a work on tactics from a philosopher, who is an Encyclopedist. This is as if the pope were to address a work to me on toleration. I have not entirely read the book of the young officer; but, looking over the preface, I there found things which certainly deserve to be corrected, that homage may be paid to truth. The young author inconsiderately affirms that the Prussians are not brave; whereas it was to their valour that I was indebted for all my success in war. This young man ought to have known that, however great may be the address and dexterity of troops, they will never vanquish an enemy, except by driving him from the place in which he is posted; and that this cannot be executed but by brave and determined men. The passage deserving of censure ought to be effaced; for, by reading the titles of the chapters, I perceive it to be the work of a man of genius, who endeavours to gain information himself and to inform others, and who is waiting for an opportunity to distinguish himself. You will have the kindness to digest

digest this short passage, concerning a profession which you do not love, but under the protection of which all other professions are exercised.

You do me much honour to suppose my influence so great with Mustapha. There was but little difficulty to inspire him with pacific sentiments, because he wanted the means of continuing the war; and, by prolonging it, he would have endangered the total overthrow of his empire. I will venture to foretel that the earth will not open, and vomit forth flames, to consume the workmen who shall rebuild the temple of Jerusalem. The treasury of Mustapha is too empty, after the enormous expences of the war, for him to undertake such a work; nor are the Jews of Constantinople sufficiently wealthy for the enterprize; therefore, to succeed, the Encyclopedists must make a collection over the whole earth, and impose a tax on free thinkers, with which money we will raise the edifice, in despite of fire and flames.

Do not however imagine that, when the temple shall be built, the gentlemen of the Sorbonne will be unhorsed. They will find quibbles, distinctions, and sophisms, and persuade mankind that the new temple will not stand upon the place on which the old was formerly built. At Paris, they will draw maps of Jerusa-

lem, without ever having been there, and demonstrate to the devout that God, by a miracle, laughing at the incredulous, so fascinated their eyes that they chose a spot very distant from that of the temple of Solomon, for the foundation of their edifice. Fanatics, who are determined that truth shall always be on their side, although they never respect truth, but are in the habit of lying with impunity, will never be found without an answer. These good gentlemen however are so reviled, and in so much discredit, among thinking people, that they cannot become more contemptible than they already are. Let us therefore leave to doctor Tamponet, doctor Riboulet, and to the modern Garasses*, the feeble

* Garasse was a Jesuit, whose writings, especially against the famous advocate Pasquier, were remarkable for their virulence. Pasquier, as early as the sixteenth century, pleading for the university of Paris against the Jesuits, enumerated their vices as a society, and asserted they deserved to be exterminated out of France. Garasse, among other passages not less amusing for their absurd acrimony, has the following—"Adieu
 " Master Pasquier; adieu wormwood; adieu lawyer without
 " conscience; adieu head without brain; adieu man without
 " humanity; adieu Christian without religion; adieu arch
 " enemy of the holy see; adieu unnatural son, that pro-
 " claimest thy mother's shame; adieu till the meeting of that
 " great parliament (the resurrection) when thou shalt plead
 " no more for the university." This was written after the
 death of the advocate, and addressed—"To the late Stephen
 " Pasquier, *wherever he may be.*" T.

argument

argument of Ammianus Marcellinus to prop up the old magic palace, which is falling to decay.

Philosophers and divine minds, the children of universal reason, have taught men to think, and have at length swept from the imagination the tales of the Afs's skin and Blue-beard, which have so long been held sacred, by knaves in cassocks. For this reason it is that I love these philosophers, and that all men of sense ought to erect altars to their memory. I shall dedicate a small one to the Anaxagoras of the Encyclopedie, and addressing him shall say—" My common sense
 " blesses thy superior reason, that brushes
 " away the rust which clogs the wheels of the
 " machine of intelligence; that teaches men to
 " examine, to combine, to suspect themselves,
 " and to take nothing for granted, which experience has not proved." I shall then offer up a short prayer to the fortunate genius of France—
 " Oh Genius, if still thou protectest the empire
 " of the Gauls, watch over the days of Anaxagoras, who is the only one that remains of
 " their great men! Suffer not the sickle of
 " Death to cut off his harvest, when but half
 " ripe! Confirm his health, and let him behold
 " scions of science rising under his shade, that

“one day shall be capable of affording equal
“shelter!”

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R XCII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, August 14, 1772.

I HAVE not been negligent in my endeavours to render myself worthy of the confidence with which your majesty has been pleased to honour me, by empowering me to choose a professor of rhetoric and logic, for your academy*. After the most exact enquiry, I believe I have succeeded, and have the honour to send a professor to your majesty, for whose capacity, character, and conduct, I think I may answer. I have written more at length to M. de Catt, who will inform your majesty.

Not as a philosopher and encyclopedist did I take the liberty to send your majesty the Essay on Tactics, by M. de Guibert, but, with all Eu-

* *Academie des gentilshommes*—Founded by the king, for fifteen of the young nobility, immediately after the conclusion of the peace of 1763. T.

rope, as an admirer of the great and rare military talents of your majesty, did I think it my duty to inform you of a work in which the homage due to those sublime talents is paid; a work of which your majesty is the best judge the author can desire, and whose approbation would be the most honourable, and the most flattering, he could receive. This approbation, sire, should there be any necessity, might counterbalance the judgment of all Europe: like as Lucan estimated the suffrage of Cato equal to that of the gods.

I perceive, with pain, your majesty is not satisfied with the passage in the preliminary discourse, in which you think the Prussians are accused of want of valour. I have not the work before me, to justify the author, who is departed on a journey of some months, and of whom I cannot demand what his reasons could be for such a reproach: yet am I very certain his intention could not have been to accuse troops that have gained at least twelve battles with the want of courage. I am persuaded his meaning only could be that the Prussians would not have been so successful, had they been nothing more than brave, and had they not possessed a general of such consummate knowledge in military manœuvres, which are

now more than ever necessary. This assertion, far from being a reproach, appears to me to be additional praise, both to these brave troops and, particularly, to the hero by whom they were commanded.

Such, sire, is the answer I think my encyclopedic philosophy may return to your majesty, in justification of a young officer, with whose admiration of you, and esteem for your troops, I am acquainted. I shall not be equally eager to justify myself, concerning your majesty's accusation that I do not love war. How would this be possible to a philosophic sovereign, who in his works has so well described the evils which war brings on mankind; who never made war, except when forced by circumstances; whose whole endeavours, during four or five years, seem to have been to avoid war; and who, to obtain his purpose, has acted with prudence and equity such as, at this moment, excites the admiration of all Europe?

I have no doubt that Mustapha has the best of reasons, to conform to the pacific sentiments with which he has been inspired by your majesty; a new proof that you are as little in love with war as I am. But I am not quite satisfied to find your majesty has not said a single word concerning the temple of Jerusalem. The rebuilding
of

of this temple, fire, is my passion ; as the destruction of the Christian religion is that of the patriarch of Ferney. I well know that, did the doctors of the Sorbonne behold the temple standing, they would find some mode of explaining away the prophecy. God be thanked, they have answered objections equally difficult. I still however think well enough of them to presume that, at least for a short time, and at first, they would find themselves under some little embarrassment ; and I very much wish Mustapha had the wit to play them this knave's trick : after which we should go to mafs, as usual, and should only laugh a little the more at those by whom mafs is said.

I know not whether your majesty will venture to inform the Russians, your dear allies, of a little accident which has just happened, at Spa, to one of their countrymen. This person had passed some months at Paris, where he had learnt to dress with elegance. Accordingly, he had ordered a green coat, made in the height of the fashion ; but a horse, seeing him thus dressed, mistook him for a bundle of green fodder, and gave him so rude a bite in the shoulder, that the poor green man is seriously ill. I believe the uniform of the Russian infantry is

green; would not this, fire, be a good reason to have it changed?

I endeavour to laugh, fire, when, alas! I have no great inclination; for, if the horses at Spa mistake Russians for bundles of green fodder, fit to eat, the inquisitors believe philosophers to be bundles of straw, fit for nothing but to make a blaze. I am disgusted with writing, and, notwithstanding the little esteem in which your majesty holds geometry, I should take refuge in that asylum, could my poor head support the necessary application. I mean however to attempt a continuation of the history of the French academy; but how great will be my sufferings, while I refrain from speaking my thoughts. I shall even be happy if, while concealing them, I can but lead the reader to imagine what they are.

I am, with the most profound respect, most lively gratitude, and the most, &c.

LETTER XCIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, August 22, 1772.

THIS letter will be presented to you by M. Borelli, whom I have the honour to send to fill up the double post of the late M. Touffaint, in the Royal Academy of the Nobles, and the Royal Academy of the Sciences, two seminaries which do equal honour to your majesty; the one by its institution, the other by its renewal, and the protection which is granted it by the philosopher of kings, and the king of philosophers. M. de Catt must already have rendered an account to your majesty, of the minute and numerous enquiries I made, relative to M. Borelli. In consequence of these, and what I know of his abilities and character, I am persuaded he will merit the bounties with which I entreat your majesty to be pleased to honour him. I have hitherto been tolerably successful, in corresponding to the confidence placed in me by your majesty, and in the choice of various persons, which choice you have done me the honour to commit to my care; and I have every reason to hope I shall not, on the present occasion, incur reproach.

M. Borelli,

M. Borelli, when he shall present this letter to your majesty, is at the same time charged to deliver you a work, written by one of my friends, who has commissioned me to present his performance to a judge so excellent. The author, sire, is M. le Chevalier de Chatellux ; a man of quality, of one of the most ancient families in France ; a brigadier in the royal army, possessed of understanding and merit, and penetrated with admiration for your majesty. The constant application which the chevalier de Chatellux has bestowed on his profession, has not prevented him, after your majesty's example, from successfully cultivating letters and philosophy. The work he has the honour to lay before your majesty will prove that, to an extensive knowledge of history, philosophic views, and the love of humanity, he adds the talent of a writer.

The purport of his work is to prove that the human species is less wretched than formerly ; and that, in consequence of the progress of knowledge, evil will continually decrease. This I rather wish than hope ; but, be your majesty's thoughts on the subject what they may, I have reason to believe that the work will inspire you with esteem for the author ; by which, should your majesty be pleased to inform him of it, he will be infinitely flattered : and he, sire, is the
more

more deserving of so soothing a mark of kindness by being, at present, almost the only person of distinguished birth, in this unfortunate kingdom, who truly loves letters, and the literati. Ah ! sire, how much need has this wretched literature that a protector like yourself should long be preserved ! Dating from the administration of cardinal de Fleury, and even farther back, how many years have passed away, in France, since letters have remained without encouragement, and destitute of respect ! Nay they are even hated, at present ; nor is there a man in office who is not their open or their secret enemy. Your majesty, who has had the goodness to denote your satisfaction, at my new and insignificant dignity of secretary of the French academy, cannot imagine all the artifices that were employed, to deprive me of the place. The members were far from unanimous in their votes. All the academicians of the court and the church, that is to say near one-third, were inimical to me. But it is a pleasure to be judged by our peers ; and I am consoled and flattered that all my fellow members, who are men of letters, supported me ; one only excepted, who is a priest, and a bigotted politician. A person of Versailles has assured me that, notwithstanding the plurality of votes, I should have been excluded by the court, had
not

not those marks of bounty which I have received from foreigners, and especially from your majesty, been my protection. Nor is this the first time that I have felt how much I am indebted to your majesty's bounty, for preserving me from persecution in my own country. Marshal de Richelieu, the most bitter of the enemies of literature, philosophy, and every kind of merit, the man so gratuitously celebrated by the philosopher of Ferney, was at the head of the cabal. Enraged at his ill success, he revenged himself on poor De Lille, the translator of the Georgics, whom he has caused to be excluded from the academy, after having been almost unanimously voted one of its members, and though De Lille is as estimable for his character and conduct as he is for talents.

He is highly flattered and honoured by the desire your majesty has testified, to see an entire translation of Virgil, executed by him. He has already finished the fourth book, which appears to me excellent. The efforts of superstition are vain; men of letters are ants, and rebuild their city, when it has been destroyed.

I have been informed that the poem of M. Helvetius, on Happiness, may be had at Deux Ponts, and that it is preceded by a very well written preface, with the author of which I am
unacquainted.

unacquainted. I am likewise assured that another work by Helvetius, in prose, and much more considerable, is now in the press. I am ignorant even of its title, but it is said to be a kind of supplement to his book on the understanding*.

I am with the most profound respect, &c.

P. S. I take the liberty, first, to add to this prolix and dull letter a portrait, which has been engraved here, beneath which are verses that my mathematical muse has ventured to write on your majesty, to whom I believe, bad as they are, they are already known. It is to me a precious portrait, because it will remain a monument of the sentiments with which I have long been devoted to your majesty. I wish the lines were better; however I will be bold to say, with Boileau, though his subject was very different,

*Non, non, sur ce sujet, pour écrire avec grâce,
Il ne faut point monter au sommet du Parnasse;
Et, sans aller rêver dans le double vallon,
Le sentiment suffit, et vaut un Apollon †.*

I have hung this portrait in my cabinet, be-

* *De l'Esprit*—The title of the posthumous work is—*De l'Homme & de ses Facultés*: or, *Of Man and his Faculties*. T.

† To write on such a subject well, we need not ascend the Parnassian hill, nor dream in the double valley; to feel will be sufficient, and equal to inspiration.

tween Descartes, Newton, Henry IV. and Voltaire; and I hope your majesty will not reproach me, for having introduced you into bad company. I conclude, sire, blushing at the waste I have made of your precious time, and shall only add that, should your majesty stand in need of proper masters, for your academy, for the young nobility, or any other purpose, I do not despair but that such I shall be able to procure.

L E T T E R XCIV.

From the King.

September 17, 1774.

THE professor of rhetoric, whom you have procured for me, adds to my former obligations, and will contribute to the improvement of an academy which I have much at heart, and the progress of which has hitherto tolerably well answered my expectations. The care of education is an important object to sovereigns, which ought not to be neglected, and which I extend to the provinces. Such are the amusements of my old age. I in a manner renounce that fine profession on which M. de Guibert gives such eloquent lessons. War demands the

ardour of youth, and ill corresponds with my weight of years. Not to mention that, in conformity to the sentiments of our masters, the Encyclopedists, I do not content myself with maintaining my small domains in peace, but preach peace to others. I hope the Turk will listen to me, though there are some who addict themselves to the trade *, and who preach war. However, I have a closing period in my pocket, which I hope will convince more effectually than all the fine phrases of these warlike preachers. In fine, you shall have the sixth canto of the confederates, that you may be in possession of all the follies which enter my imagination.

In quality of prophet, I foretel peace; although it is not yet concluded. Were the difficulties to be removed not so numerous, the building of the temple of Jerusalem should be one of the articles; but we must not at present add a condition which would but embroil the business. This may become the subject of a private treaty. Let not the Sorbonne however have the least intimation of the matter, or you will see the purses of the devout emptied, and the purest of your gold sent into Turkey, to

* *Qui se mêle du métier.*—Alluding I imagine to the Muffi and the Ulemats, who the king tells us, in another passage, were bribed by the French and promoted the continuance of the war. T.

counteract the patrons of the temple. Were the temple however to be built, the square caps of the Sorbonne would maintain, with their hack-nied sophisms and a most noble effrontery, that fact is falsehood. So hard, so repulsive, are the sculls of priests; especially of doctors. We have seen them support their opinions in despite of proof. You will laugh at them, and they will anathematize you; but no matter, laugh on.

I know not whether the horses of Spa do or do not eat Russians, but I certainly know it is a food the Janissaries cannot digest. I hope this adventure will not be inserted in the history of your academy, of which you will acquit yourself with ability equal to what you have always hitherto discovered. The academy certainly could not have made a better choice of a perpetual secretary; and, now that Fontenelle is no more, it was the only means to have their memoirs read. I shall be one of your readers and admirers, and among those who interest themselves in whatever concerns your happiness and preservation.

On which I pray, &c.

LETTER XCV.

From the King.

October 6, 1772.

M. BORELLI is just arrived, and has given me the packet you committed to his charge. As far as I can judge, he appears to be able and exceedingly willing. I immediately explained to him the nature of his duties; and as, in the plan of education which is adopted by the academy, there are methods greatly different from many of those practised by other schools, these I pointed out to him, and have no doubt but he will answer the expectation which his good name, and particularly your approbation has excited. The desire I have to see this my little institution succeed renders me much the more grateful for all such aids as can promote its progress. The further we advance in life, the more we are convinced of the wrong done to society, by the neglect of education in youth. I take all possible means to correct this abuse, and reform the colleges, universities, and even the village schools. But the fruits of such cares cannot be gathered in less than thirty years; they are not to be enjoyed by me. I however

shall console myself, by procuring my country an advantage of which it was destitute.

I really do not understand you French people. Does your nation suppose that the high reputation it acquired, in the time of Louis XIV. was founded on any other basis than the advantages it derived from the study of the arts and sciences, dignified by that air of grandeur which the monarch imparted to all his actions? It ought to be remembered, at Paris, that Athens formerly drew a concourse of people from all nations, and that even its conquerors, the Romans, repaired thither to study, and gain information. Athens at present is become desolate, and is visited by no man. Paris is menaced by a similar fate, should it not better know how to preserve the advantages it possesses. Inclosed is a letter for the chevalier de Chatellux. His equals were formerly numerous in France. Nobility destitute of knowledge is a vain title, which places an ignorant man in the glare of day, and exposes him to the irony of those who shall thus seek amusement.

By what you have written, I perceive the academy, like the court, has its intrigues. Persons of restless minds every where cabal; but true merit surmounts all such obstacles. It struggles, makes its way through the crowd, and

and is finally triumphant. This has happened to you, and the same cannot fail to happen to M. de Lille, who in my opinion is more an academician than one half of your forty.

From your postscript, I learn you have very honourably placed an engraving of me in the company of people superior to what I am, or can ever become.

I send you a medal which has been struck, in consequence of an event that interests the Sarmatians, and I know not whom*. I wish it had been struck in consequence of the conclusion of peace; but, in despite of artifice and machinations, this peace will be concluded; and, if so it shall please the Fates, in a short time. I then flatter myself, according to the hopes given me by M. Borelli, I shall have the pleasure to see you, and personally be able to assure you of the esteem I have for you.

On which I pray, &c.

* The partition of Poland.

L E T T E R XCVI.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, October 9, 1772.

I HAVE received the new *diatribe* * of your majesty, against the poor the most poor Polish Confederates, and their no less poor allies, if we ought to bestow the mean epithet of *diatribe* on an excellent piece of poetry. For though those who are the subject of this humorous poem may, by their ridiculous conduct, well merit such an epithet, the humour itself is deserving of one more worthy, from the wit, mirth, and levity with which it abounds. Permit me, however, sire, to add, in the character of a good and honest Frenchman, that I should have been better pleased not to have seen my dear countrymen partakers of this ridicule. I shall neither examine their deserts nor the part they have acted, in the business. I am only sorry that the end of the cudgel, which your majesty has laid on the shoulders of the Poles, has reached the chevaliers by whom they have been aided. But, as I assume no part of

* The word here played upon best corresponds to the word oration taken in a colloquial sense. T.

their

their fame to myself, neither shall I accept of any of the raps which have been bestowed on their knuckles: they may do as they please.

The circumstance, fire, which most delights me, at the conclusion of this charming poem, is the peace which is there foretold. For, mathematician as I am, though I pique myself in taking some pleasure in good poetry, I take still greater pleasure to see men live in unity and peace. The letter your majesty has done me the honour to write to me confirms this sweet hope, and induces me to look forward to approaching peace. Yet it is here affirmed that the congress is broken up; but I believe the word of your majesty to be truth itself, and hope that, if it be broken up, it will soon again be renewed; thanks to the period in your majesty's pocket, of which you have been pleased to speak, and which, if I am able to divine, should be a period of great efficacy. Full of confidence, fire, in this eloquent period, I have been in haste to announce the news to my brother Encyclopedists, who have this thing and this only in common with the church, that, like her, they hold blood in abhorrence.

Pleasantry apart, this peace will crown your majesty with glory, because of the worthy and high part you have acted in it; and, though I confess

that additional glory to your majesty is, according to the proverb, like carrying water to the ocean, still the water is excellent that flows from so pure a source. To the title of hero will be added that of pacificator.

I am only vexed, and my Encyclopedic brethren participate my grief, to find that the *re-edification* of the *edificatory* temple of Jerusalem cannot be included, as a secret article, in the treaty. Since nothing better can be done, the Jews must have patience, till they can settle on the banks of the Jordan. I hope the Turks will be beaten once more, in the first war they shall undertake against a philosophic monarch in reality, and a Christian king for form's sake; and that this philosophic hero, being no good Christian, will render the Jews this small service; from which good intention he may even gain some ready money, for favours ought to be reciprocal*.

The professor whom I have had the honour to send your majesty, I imagine is now arrived at Berlin: I hope your majesty has seen him, and I have no doubt he will, by his assiduity and conduct, fulfil all I have predicted.

* D'Alembert appears to have entertained hopes in favour of the Jews, who were severely treated by Frederic, in Pomerelia, from hints thus given under the mask of jocularity. T.

I know not whether your majesty be informed that M. Thiriot, who is here charged with your literary correspondence, draws very near his end. Should your majesty not have fixed on a successor to his office, and should you be pleased to confide in my choice, I take the liberty to recommend, on the same conditions, M. Suard, a man of understanding, taste, and probity, who has long been successively employed in the *Journal Etranger*, and the *Gazette Litteraire*, and who is the author of an excellent French translation of Robertson's History of Charles V. I venture to assure your majesty you cannot find a person who, in every respect, will be a better substitute to M. Thiriot, and I dare flatter myself you will the more readily believe me, because of my known zeal in the interests of your majesty, and of the experience you have already had, of the scrupulous attention I have continually paid to the selection of persons, the choice of whom you have done me the honour to confide to me.

I am, with the most profound respect, the most lively gratitude, and the most sincere admiration, &c.

L E T T E R XCVII.

From the King.

October 27, 1772.

I CONCEIVED how great was the rashness of a German, who sent French poetry to an academician at Paris; and, what is more, to one of the forty. I felt the impertinence of remitting, to one of the first of the French literati, a satire upon French adventurers. But, three or four persons of merit excepted, the majority of these adventurers consisted of the dregs of the last reduction of your troops; and, as to my poetry, as it pretended to nothing higher than the ballad style, it appeared to me that a Teutonic bard, well stocked with effrontery, might venture its appearance.

The peace in which you interest yourself is making rapid progress; the congress has renewed the negotiations, and before the close of winter the troubles of the East will be calmed. I am but a feeble instrument, in the hands of Providence, co-operating to a salutary work. The pacific dispositions of the empress of Russia are all effectual, in this affair; the only honour which can revert to me is that I have supported
the

the interests of the empress, by negociation, at Constantinople, and in other courts. Peace, no doubt, is the end which all politicians ought to endeavour to attain ; but how vast are the combustibles dispersed over the earth, and how many new conflagrations are to be feared ! Not all the waters of the ocean will perhaps be sufficient to extinguish them ; even though all the Encyclopedists were armed with buckets, and syringes, and were to consume their lives in the rudest labours.

I should willingly send some of the Hebrew vermin, of which I should be glad to be rid, to the new temple of Jerusalem, if good Mr. Mustapha could be persuaded to allow it to be rebuilt. But the sultan is more embarrassed by the difficulty of regaining Egypt, than by the affairs of Sion. Should some rich Jew of London, or Amsterdam, offer him a large sum, and propose to rebuild the temple, I imagine the sultan would grant his assent ; but your wealthy Jews love their money better than their synagogue ; and sectaries discover so little zeal that they will not purchase those privileges, at the vilest price, for which they formerly cut each others' throats. The zealots of Europe are all confined to France. Amiens and Toulouse have lately furnished examples. Spain becomes

ice; Vienna daily grows lukewarm; and the English have even affirmed, in their newspapers, that the pope is turned Calvinist. I will not warrant the fact, but I have seen it in print.

Your professor is arrived, and you must before this have received my thanks. His beginning is good, nor have I any doubt of the excellence of your choice.

And is poor Thiriot departing! Forty years have I known him, yet never saw him in my life. In his youth he was called the hawker of Voltaire. His decline has been evident; his letters are barren, and contain nothing either amusing or poignant. Let the person you propose write me a specimen, that I may judge of his manner, and let him be careful not to omit any of the anecdotes of Paris, if they are pleasant; for good books become so rare that one in a year scarcely makes its appearance, though gaiety remains the characteristic of the nation.

What intelligence shall I send you from this place, except that one end of the empire of anarchy has been given me, to reduce to order? I am so embarrassed that I could wish to recur to some Encyclopedic legislator, who might establish laws in this country, which should render the people all equal, bestow understanding

on the foolish, erase interest and ambition from the heart of every citizen, and should present only the phantom of a sovereign, whom they might dismiss whenever they thought proper, and one who should impose no taxes, but should furnish his own supplies. Such are the high ideas which at present employ my mind. Beautiful as such a government might be, I despair of my want of capacity for establishing it, according to the rules which your learned legislators (who never have governed) prescribe. In fine, we must do as well as we can, and I must have credit given to me for my good intentions; like a scholar who is desirous of teaching in the absence of his masters, and who, not well comprehending his rules, explains them erroneously.

Continue in good health, and take care of yourself, that I may again have the pleasure of seeing you.

On which I pray, &c.

LET.

L E T T E R XCVIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, November 20, 1772.

I HAVE received the beautiful medal, which your majesty has done me the honour to send, and the subject of which is the new provinces you have acquired. The legend, *Regno redintegrato*, proves that your majesty but once more takes possession of what anciently belonged to your house. If I do not mistake, you are now master of a great part of the trade of the Baltic, and I congratulate this sea, which, I believe, never before had a master so renowned. I hope it will be to her advantage, and to that of Europe likewise, as far as commerce is concerned; and I ardently wish that both may long continue to enjoy the glorious reign of your majesty.

I strongly suspected that the pocket period, which you were pleased to mention in one of your last letters, would be efficacious in persuading Mustapha to peace; and, for the good of mankind, I rejoice that this so much wished-for, and so necessary peace, is at length certain, and near, as your majesty has given me to hope.

I tremble, and allow there is indeed much combustible matter, and some perhaps which is near enough to your states ; but I firmly confide that he who could so efficaciously throw water on the fire, which has been four years raging, will be fortunate enough to extinguish the smothered embers. Your majesty will be better employed in the progress of education, which you have so successfully attended to, than by engaging in foreign quarrels.

I hope you will be satisfied with the professor I have done myself the honour to send you.

I imagine your majesty will by this courier receive a literary letter from M. Suard, whom I proposed as the successor to poor Thiriot. The latter died a few days since, and I have reason to believe your majesty will not be dissatisfied with the intelligence sent by M. Suard. He will conform, with equal zeal and intellect, to all your majesty's wishes ; and I take the liberty to renew my most humble prayers to your majesty, and request the same favours, in behalf of M. Suard, which you were pleased to bestow on M. Thiriot. I wait your orders, and venture to hope they will be favourable.

I have sent your majesty's letter to the chevalier de Chatellux, who at present is not at Paris, and I have no doubt but he will immediately
return

return his most humble thanks to your majesty. He is worthy of your bounty and esteem, by his knowledge, character, desire of information, and his military assiduity, which is not impeded by his other studies. Unfortunately for the French nation, it is but too true that the same praise can only be bestowed on a very small number of his rank. The majority of our courtiers are more than indifferent to literature; they are its declared enemies; for they are convinced, in their hearts, that they are despised by men of understanding; though it must be owned that, in this, the men of understanding are very wrong. We continue to exist on our former literary fame; but existence so precarious cannot long be supported, and we shall become the bye-word of Europe. This is a pity, for we were formed to be amiable!

Your majesty then will not give, or at least procure, by the intervention of Mustapha, the Sorbonne, the small mortification to see that temple rebuilt which, were it standing, would cause them some embarrassment.—Well, for the glory of our holy religion, which is become more intolerant and persecuting than ever, I submit! God be praised, I shall not long be a spectator of these evils! Almost continual watchings forebode an inflammatory propensity, the
conclusion

conclusion of which will probably be that I shall take leave of this best of possible worlds. I shall without difficulty console myself, should the Fates deign to add, to the precious days of your majesty, those days which they appear willing to retrench from the very useless, but most sincere, most devoted, and most grateful of your admirers.

With these sentiments I shall all my life remain, &c.

L E T T E R XCIX.

From the King.

December 4, 1772.

YOU do me and the Baltic too much honour, by interesting yourself in our behalf. Notwithstanding our union, I have no inclination to consummate our marriage at the bottom of the sea ; nor, like the Doge of Venice, to commit myself often to its waves. These are boisterous latitudes, and the neighbourhood something resembles your Iroquois, who are at present subjected to the English. I know not what those other barbarians who inhabit Byzantium will do ; or whether my pocket period will make a greater impression

impression on them than the factious harangues of some of their pretended friends; who I believe wish to see them driven out of Europe, provided war and trouble might still continue to vex the North. The Sorbonne would apparently look with a tranquil eye on that war; and, should peace be concluded, the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem will be as little thought of as the rebuilding of the tower of Babel. Amid these various contentions, the order of Jesuits is to be entirely abolished, and the Pope, after long hesitation, cedes at length, as he says, to the importunities of the eldest sons of the church. I have received an ambassador from the general of the order, who presses me openly to declare myself its protector. My answer was that, when Louis XV. thought proper to disband the regiment of Fitz-James, I did not believe it to be my duty to intercede for the corps; and that the Pope ought to be allowed to make what reform he thought proper, without the interference of heretics.

You continually complain of the little esteem in which the French, at present, hold literature. To this many reasons contribute. The nation, covetous of glory, protected the first great men who, after the revival of letters, by their writings, increased their country's lustre, and some of whom

whom are not inferior to the most famous of the ancients. They afterward grew weary of this perfection; the successors of these great men were not their equals; study was less profound, and every man undertook to write, and appear in print. Most of these authors, whose morals were a discredit to them, were incapable of gaining the public esteem, and contempt was transferred from the person to the art. To these considerations be it added that Paris is an abyss of debauchery, into which your headlong youth plunge: many there perish, or lose all desire to be industrious. The consequence is that, as men only delight in what promises success, these frivolous youth are acquainted only with the gross pleasures of the senses, and do not delight in the arts, of which they want sufficient knowledge to judge; and it is more easy to despise what we do not understand than to confess our ignorance. What time has a man of fashion at Paris, I will not say for study, but, for thought? Dressing, visits, dining, the theatre, gaming, supper till two in the morning, mistresses, and to bed! There they lie till eleven o'clock. Thus every moment is employed, and employed in doing nothing.

But I know not what I am about. It certainly is not for me to give you a description of Paris,

with which you must be better acquainted than I am. The splendour of France, during the reign of Louis XIV, was too great to be long sustained. There is a certain point of elevation, beyond which we cannot possibly rise. The most interesting subjects become exhausted; we can only glean after those who have reaped an ample harvest; and, with equal genius, we must remain their inferiors; because the success of a work depends greatly on the judicious choice of a subject. I am at present disgusted with the trifling literary correspondence which I have maintained with France; but it is with the want of materials, and not with the writers themselves. When Fontenelle, Voltaire, Mairan, Crebillon, and even the author of *Vert-Vert* (Gresset) wrote, it was a pleasure to hear from France, for it was news from Parnassus. The works of these authors were worthy of being universally read; but, at present, nothing but compilations appear, or collections of the twenty-three thousand six hundred and thirty-three great men, and eight thousand five hundred and sixty-five illustrious women, whom France has produced.

Nor can your journals keep up their spirit, but exist by extracts. Who, for example, would study the new art of administering clysters; or
the

the modern mode of handling the razor, dedicated to Louis XV. to teach him to shave himself; or the Dictionaries, and Encyclopedies, of every kind, which appear? These things excite my disgust; and, as I have no correspondent at Athens, now it is become Serines, neither do I wish to have one at Paris, now that the merchandize in which I take pleasure is no longer to be procured. But this does not disturb my rest, and I would have you remember that sleep and hope are the two opiates which Nature has deigned to grant humanity, to enable it to endure actual evil. Sleep therefore and hope, and all will be well. Live for the mortification of those who envy you; and the good done to your enemies will be greater, by your existence, than all the pleasure they will derive from your death. Recollect that Paris does not contain the whole world; and that, if in your own country your worth be not known, more justice is done you elsewhere.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R C.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, January 1, 1772.

PENETRATED as I am, by those tender and respectful sentiments which your majesty knows I have long entertained for your person, let me request permission to begin my letter nearly as Demosthenes begins his oration *for the crown*. I first petition all the gods and goddesses to preserve, during the coming year as during the preceding, a monarch so dear to philosophy, and to me, insignificant as I am, in particular. I further pray that the same gods, if it be true that the hearts of kings be in their hands, will be pleased to continue the favour of this great and worthy monarch, such as he has hitherto done me the honour to confer it; and of which I hope, by the warmth of my gratitude, my attachment, and my admiration, I am not wholly unworthy.

This admiration, sire, would if possible be increased, by reading the charming letter which your majesty has written to M. de Voltaire. As he is acquainted with my friendship for him, and with all that I feel for your majesty, he supposes he has been guilty of no indiscretion in
 sending

sending me a copy of that letter, which I have given him a promise not to transcribe, but which I wish all men of letters to hear, that they may be sensible how much they are indebted to you. The esteem you testify for their chief merits their whole gratitude, and the manner in which you express this esteem is full of those graces and charms which breathe through all your majesty's letters. The passage on the Turks, beaten although they have no philosophers, is peculiarly pleasing; as is that on the lyre of the Henriade, of Amphion, of the dolphin that bore him, and particularly that in which your majesty adds—*It is so much the worse for the dolphins * if they do not love great men.*—This saying is worthy of becoming proverbial, among men of letters. It shall henceforth be the burthen of my song; seeing literature oppressed and persecuted as I do.

The poor children of Loyola must be very ill indeed, to apply to a physician like your majesty, who in fact scarcely can have any efficacious remedy to administer. I suspect they are not satisfied with your majesty's answer, and that

* The letter here alluded to is number CCCLXIV. of the correspondence between the King and Voltaire; dated Potsdam, December 4, 1772. The word *dolphin* in the French language equally signifies a dolphin or the heir-apparent, and the pun is consequently lost, if lost it be, in the translation. T.

they will not do you the honour to make you a brother of the order, as they did our Louis XIV, who might have been satisfied without this dignity, and the wretched James II. of England, who was better formed to be a Jesuit than a sovereign. I do not imagine the king of Spain, who warmly presses the destruction of this brood, will discover much edification in the embassy sent to your majesty, to put themselves under your majesty's special protection. Nor can I doubt but, when he shall learn this jesuitical artifice, which procured them so excellent an ironical answer on the part of your majesty, he will redouble his efforts with our holy father for their abolishment, and our deliverance. I know indeed that, when the order shall be annihilated, philosophy and literature will derive no great advantage, in most parts of Europe. Still we shall have a nest of caterpillars the less; and caterpillars too that were exceedingly prolific, and destructive.

The judgment of your majesty on the poem of Helvetius, in your letter to M. de Voltaire, is like all your other judgments, exceedingly just and precise. I, like your majesty, am persuaded the author would have corrected his poem before publication, had he lived long enough to present it to the world. But is not your majesty

delighted with the preface, which has been added? It appears to be full of taste, philosophy, and feeling, and to be exceedingly well written. Our priests are not satisfied with it, which is an additional mark of merit.

Your majesty no longer wishes to have a literary correspondent. I confess our literature is on the decline; that our thistles are numerous, our flowers soon out of bloom, and our fruits few. For our consolation, however, it appears to me that other nations are in no better a state; and that, if we are on the decay, we still keep the most distinguished place. I fear we shall not long preserve this advantage, and that other nations, whose taste our writers have contributed to form, and to increase their knowledge, will soon be our victors; like a boy who beats his nurse, when she has no more milk to give. I weep in silence over the fate with which our literature is threatened, and my only consolation is to recollect that there is still a philosophic hero, in the north, who knows the value of science, who loves and protects letters, and who is at once the chief and the model of men of literature.

I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R C I.

From the King.

January 8, 1773.

INSTEAD of the gods to whom Demosthenes addressed himself, I shall implore the laws of motion, those vivifying principles of all nature, the effects of which you have so learnedly calculated, to prolong while possible their activity in you, that you may many years continue to instruct your cotemporaries, and we who are of the ignorant, and have not the honour to be mathematicians. I wish at the same time that Fortune, a goddess to whom you do not often sacrifice, would shed her happy influence over your lengthened life; for without happiness life is but a load, and often a load that is insupportable. If you ask me what I mean by Fortune, I answer whatever you please; Destiny; the Fates; Necessity; Predestination; any thing that can render you happy. Such are my wishes, not for the new year only, but for numbers of succeeding years.

I was flattered by your approbation of my opinion, concerning the patriarch of Ferney. Enlightened posterity will envy France this phenomenon

nomenon of literature, and blame the nation for not having sufficiently known his worth. Men of such genius appear but seldom. Grecian antiquity afforded one Homer, the father of epic poetry; one Aristotle, who, though occasionally clouded and obscure, possessed universal knowledge; and one Epicurus, to whom to do justice a commentator like Newton was necessary. The Romans have furnished us with one Cicero, whose eloquence equalled that of Demosthenes, and whose erudition was vast; and one Virgil, whom I regard as the greatest of poets. A prodigious gap succeeded, till the age of Bayle, Leibnitz, Newton, and Voltaire. For an infinite number of wits and men of talents have lived, who cannot be ranked among this first class. Nature perhaps is obliged to make efforts, to bring forth genius so sublime; perhaps many are stifled by the accidents of birth, and the sports of fortune, which turn them from their proper path; and perhaps some years are as barren, in the production of mind, as others are in the production of corn, wine, and oil. France, as you say, shews tokens of this sterility; talents are there discovered, but not much genius; and, though her neighbours perceive the dearth, they themselves are but little better provided. England and Italy are
in

in a languishing state. Hume and Metastasio must not be compared either with lord Bolingbroke or even with Ariosto; and we Germans have twenty dialects, but no fixed language: this essential instrument being wanting, the cultivation of letters is injured. A taste for sound criticism is not yet become sufficiently familiar to us. I endeavour to correct the schools, in the essential part of the belles-lettres; but perhaps I am among the one-eyed, who point out the road to the blind.

We do not want experimental philosophers, nor mechanics; but we have not yet acquired a taste for mathematics. In vain do I tell my countrymen Leibnitz ought to have successors; none are to be found. When men of genius arise, these discoveries will all be made; and this chance I think superior to your calculation. We must leave Nature, who is free in her operations, freely to act; we poor creatures can neither forward nor prevent her efforts, when she shall be disposed to make them, for the production of those highly desirable beings. We still have men of learning; yet would you believe that I am obliged to encourage the study of the Greek language, which, were it not for my cares, would be entirely lost?

From this faithful sketch, you will judge that
your

your country has no reason yet to fear it shall be surpassed by other nations. I thank Heaven that I came into the world in good time. I have seen the remains of an age which will ever be memorable, in the annals of the human mind. The fall of the leaf is come; but the next generation will even be worse than the present. It appears the decline will continue, till some superior genius shall arise, awaken the world from its slumbers, and restore that stimulus which inspires a love for all that is estimable, and useful to the human race.

In the mean time, let us enjoy the present, without disturbing ourselves concerning the past, or the future. Look with the eye of a stoick on whatever can give you pain, and eagerly seize all that gives pleasure. Reflect as long as we will, to this we must come. I wish with all my heart agreeable objects may be predominant with you, or that you would delude yourself; for, in despite of reason, it is better to be happy with error than unhappy with truth.

On which I pray, &c,

L. L. T.

L E T T E R CII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, Good-Friday, April 9, 1773.

THE public papers have so frequently spoken of the great occupations of your majesty that, from motives of respect for your time, I have feared lest I should importune you with my philosophic or literary trifling. Not that I have not continually thought of the great prince who, after having so long been the hero of the north, seems at present to have become both hero and arbitrator. But, however much interested in your majesty's glory, I earnestly desire, for your repose and preservation, you should be the arbitrator only, and that no circumstances may force you, once again, to display the warrior. We are so much threatened with this scourge, of war, that I who, in the language of the mouse of La Fontaine, I thank God, pique myself on my courage, am half dead with fear; not for myself, whom bullets will not so easily reach, but for your majesty, who however has more to apprehend from fatigue than from the foe, if any foes you have. The philosopher Fontenelle, during the troubles occasioned by the system of

Law, went one day to the levee of the Regent, who loved him, and said,—“ Permit me to ask
 “ your grace, with all humility, whether you
 “ hope to free yourself from your difficulties.”
 I shall not put the same question to your majesty, for you have freed yourself from difficulties much greater. I shall only take the liberty to pray God to bless you, if you maintain peace; and, if you are obliged to go to war, to pray that he may preserve you.

Were I to judge of your majesty's occupations by the philosophic and intelligent letter which you have done me the honour to write to me, I should imagine you wholly addicted to literature, and the fine arts. For who could suspect that subjects on which you speak so well, and with such minute depth, were nothing more than your recreation; and the recreation too of a few moments stolen from affairs of the utmost importance? Your majesty must ever be admired, but this admiration will ever be accompanied with pain in me, while I have any fears for your safety. Look with compassion on philosophy and letters, that cry to your majesty as David does to the Lord in his psalms—*O my God, I trust in thee; let me not be ashamed; let not mine enemies triumph over me.*

The said poor philosophy has been hotly
 alarmed

alarmed this winter. We feared we should have lost the patriarch of Ferney, who has been seriously ill, and for whose damnation pious souls have offered up the most pathetic prayers. He is better, and I hope he still may, as he himself says, *labour in the Lord's vineyard*. Literature and the nation would suffer an irreparable and an immense loss, by his death; which would be additionally cruel, under the present circumstances, for our poor literature is more than ever abandoned to bears and baboons. Your majesty cannot imagine the detestable inquisition which is exercised over all works, and the intolerable mutilations which those undergo that are supposed capable of publishing some useful truths. This rigor seems to me ill imagined; for those who, from complaisance and a desire of peace, would have submitted to be half castrated, perceiving they must be wholly, determine to take nothing away, but deliver themselves up to Mark Michael Rey, or to Gabriel Cramer *, such as God made them, with all their virility. I know not whether it be the custom in Prussia, as in France, to give cats to be spayed by tinkers; but here men of letters are treated like cats, and

* Booksellers famous for publishing works freely written, on philosophical, political, or religious subjects. T.

are delivered up to be mutilated by the tinkers of literature. Notwithstanding the little pleasure your majesty takes in geometry, did my poor head permit me, I should wholly confine myself to that study. The calculation of integrals, and the precession of the equinoxes, have nothing to fear from tinkers.

Obliged to renounce this peaceable but fatiguing study, I amuse myself in writing the history of the French Academy, of which I have the honour to be secretary; and, for my misfortune, am obliged to speak of a crowd of academicians, whose abilities did not surpass mediocrity, and who have died since the commencement of this century. I know not whether the work will ever be finished, and still less whether it will appear during my life. Did all the persons I have to mention resemble your majesty, the writer would then be supported by his subject; but when I recollect that, on one hand, I have bad authors to dissect, and, on the other, foolish censors to satisfy, my pen at every moment is ready to drop from my hand. May your majesty continue to hold yours, as you hold your sword; and may you especially continue to honour me with your bounty, of which I flatter myself I am not wholly unworthy, from
the

the tender and profound veneration with which I am, &c.

L E T T E R CIII.

From the King.

April 27, 1773^a

BETWEEN you, to whom I write, and the clerks of the post-office, who open packets, I divide my letter. To those clerks I send two pieces in verse, at which perhaps they may take offence, though this troubles me little, and which may amuse the Encyclopedists, a thing that will give me pleasure. From these verses, which perhaps are not so critically exact as to endure the revision of Vaugelas, or d'Olivet, you will perceive that our Teutonic tinkers do not spay the cats that determine to think; and as, God be thanked, we have no Sorbonne, nor bigots possessed of sufficient authority to dare to interfere, and censure our thoughts, you will discover that I and the Prussians think aloud. Yet I must not conceal from you that the perpetual secretary of our academy has thought proper to print I know not what confession, of an infidel

infidel who, as might be expected, was converted in his dying moments, by the fear of the devil, from his debaucheries. This induced me to address the epistle here added to you; nor was any thing wanting for such materials, but a better poet.

You see, my dear D'Alembert, that, while I thus fool away time, I am not much overloaded with the burthen of Europe, which you imagine I bear. How could you suppose that a king of the ancient Obotrites should emancipate himself so far as to become one of the actors of Europe? I am but a beggarly politician, who am satisfied with keeping my little corner to myself, and defending it against the cupidity and envy of the great powers. I own I have taken upon me to endeavour to re-establish peace, in Europe; but the money of the Gauls has prevailed, at Constantinople, with the Ulemats, against reasons more weighty than gold; though I can assure you that the rhodomontade tales of your countrymen, and the pretended motions which the newswriters say they will make, in the north, are the subjects of ridicule, alike at Berlin, Petersburg, and Copenhagen. We remain exceedingly pacific, no man thinks of whetting his knife here, and those who thoughtlessly should shoulder us would find to whom they are talking. Take

the half of what I have written to yourself, and cede the rest to those who, no doubt, admiring my beautiful style, are desirous of inspecting it clandestinely. They may publish this like other letters, which they have dispersed wherever they thought proper; and, if it should not satisfy them, I have leisure enough to write one which they would not publish.

Without further speech of such knaves, who weary me, I assure you I greatly interest myself in the preservation of Voltaire. He is the only man of great genius the age has produced. He is old it is true, but there still are fine remains. He recalls to mind the age of Louis XIV, which ours is far behind. His manners are polite, and he possesses those captivating qualities in which the pretended wits of this age are deficient. He has fixed his abode on the confines of a republic, and writes freely; still observing that decorum which I think every writer ought to observe, lest necessary freedom should degenerate into cynical insolence.

I think you are to be pitied, for being at present obliged to tread in the steps of Fontenelle, and to transmit the high deeds of your academicians to posterity. Fontenelle had sometimes to speak of academicians who were ridiculous enough; but at others of great men. The mixture

ture pleased and excited the curiosity of the reader; whereas you will neither have great discoveries to publish nor great talents to praise; and, being occupied in writing the lives of men of mediocrity, no one will be eager to know what you have to say. The deficiency is in the subject, and not in yourself; the difference is however great.

Who would not with avidity read the life of Newton, of Peter the Great, or of Cassini? But who would make any enquiries into the notable acts and feats of the abbé Coyer, of Marmontel, of De la Harpe, and people of their species? Believe me, all depends on the time in which we live. Alexander the Great, born in Macedon at present, would be no better than a ruffian; and were your Louis XIV the grandson of Louis XV, he would begin his reign by a general bankruptcy, which would not greatly conduce to his celebrity. To possess talents is not sufficient; means for their exertion are necessary. Had the great Condé been a capuchin friar his name would never have been known in Europe; and had Voltaire been born a peasant, in Burgundy, he would never have written the *Henriade*. Were Cæsar now to come into the world he would perhaps become one of the *monsignori*, who dance attendance in the anti-

chamber of the cordelier Ganganelli, &c.—*This is for the clerks of the post-office; and, should they think proper, they may print it for the edification of the faithful.*

You see I neglect none of my correspondents, but that these gentlemen have their part in my letter. Since they have been impertinent enough to open some of my packets, it is but right I should address them personally; them, and their no less insolent superiors, at the instigation of whom they act.

Grimm is to visit Berlin; he accompanies the hereditary prince of Darmstadt; I hope to hear of you when he arrives. In the mean time, you may be wholly at your ease respecting me. While recommending you to the protection of Urania and Minerva, I offer up a thousand prayers for your prosperity.

On which, &c.

L E T T E R C I V.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, May 14, 1773.

FROM the two pieces which your majesty has done me the honour to send me, it is evident you stand in no fear of Teutonic tinkers, as we
in

in France fear the Gallic tinkers; for certainly, in these two charming pieces, the cat does not, according to the proverb, present a velvet paw*. This fearless Teutonic cat does not shun the sacred knife of the Druids of Gaul; but the cat is at the head of one hundred and fifty thousand mastiffs, that will not suffer the paring of claws, nor castrations of a more precious kind from his writings. In proof of this, among a thousand others, fire, I only ask the two pieces you have sent, which are full of wit, reason, and philosophy as sound as it is eloquent. The lines are excellent! I humbly thank your majesty for having thought me worthy to have truths so useful, and so happily expressed, addressed to me. I was particularly enchanted, as a good mathematician ought to be, at the estimate of three hundred and thirty crowns paid instead of one thousand; and I like your majesty think, should our Druids be subjected to a similar deduction, it would be the best means of disgusting them with the follies which they retail.

The epistle to the marquis D'Argens, or rather to his ghost, is easy, fanciful, and poetic; and Philosophy, which is obliged elsewhere to hold Truth captive, is a fine wax-candle† in-

* *Patte de velours*: said of a cat that does not scratch. T.

† Alluding to the wax-candles that are offered at catholic altars. T.

debted to Providence, for enjoying a support like your majesty, in the hero of the age, and for being able to express herself with such force, freedom, and dignity, under the shade of your throne, and the protection of your arms. Nor has she less obligation to your majesty, for the assurances you give her that the north, and consequently Europe, will remain at peace. She would less be afraid of war, fire, if Druids only were the combatants. While they should be destroying each other she would recover breath. But, among the various tricks which these Druids have played the human race, they have found the secret of absenting themselves from the field of battle. They certainly are so dear to mankind that they cannot be too carefully preserved. However, fire, it is at least some consolation for philosophy, to know that the poor multitude will remain satisfied with being deceived by the Druids. They have proclaimed a truce to cutting of throats. May God and Frederic preserve them in this good disposition!

Thank Heaven and you, fire, I therefore shall have no melancholy thoughts to trouble me, while I *mix up* the history of the French academy. I use the phrase *mix up* because I regard this history as a kind of dose, which the
secretary

secretary is obliged both to prepare and swallow. I will however endeavour to gild the pill, to the best of my ability, for my own sake, and for the sake of those who shall chew it after me. I will do like Simonides, who, finding nothing to say in praise of I know not what Olympic prize-fighter, began an eulogium on Castor and Pollux.

What your majesty says concerning our literature is very true. Voltaire, though feebly, still supports its honour; but he leaves his followers far in the rear. As your majesty remarks, much must be attributed to circumstances. We are fated with perfection, and re-production is difficult; not to mention that literary inquisition, which is more than ever atrocious, shackles all minds. Your majesty has no idea of the general enmity of hypocrites, and fanatics, to unfortunate philosophy. Seeing their house every where on fire, they hurl the flaming brands at passengers. The lower rank of writers are all at their command, and in pamphlets, dictionaries, and sermons, religion is the incessant cry. Most of them are men of licentious morals, and some of them thieves. But, no matter; our holy mother church employs all she can meet in her defence; and philosophy, seeing

this army of Cartouchians* commanded by priests, drawn up in battle array, may well address the Deity like Joad—

Voilà donc quels vengeurs s'arment pour ta querelle†.

This will be no great misfortune, so long as it shall please the Supreme Being, who hitherto has protected philosophy amid such multitudes of banditti, to preserve your majesty, whose name, renown, arguments, and poetry, are so essential to the good cause.

I know not whether post-office clerks open letters. I scarcely can believe such an insult to public faith can any where be committed. But, be it supposed that they have taken copies of your majesty's two epistles, and remitted them to the grand almoner, I suspect this discreet Flamen will not circulate them among the devotees of the court of Versailles. For my own part, sire, I shall only communicate them to some of the elect, who, while reading them, will pray for their chief, their protector, and their example. I anticipate the petitions they will offer up for your majesty's precious health, and add to these my own, with that tender

* From Cartouche a famous robber. T.

† Behold what avengers arm in thy cause!

reverence with which your bounties so long have inspired my heart: and in these sentiments I shall all my life, &c.

L E T T E R CV.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIR,

Paris, May 17, 1773.

M. DE GUIBERT, colonel of the Corsican legion, who will have the honour to present this letter to your majesty, is the author of the *Essay on Tactics*, which work I, an unworthy philosopher, took the liberty last year to send, from its author, to the illustrious founder of modern tactics, and which this great master seemed to honour with his approbation. The author, after having deposited his military productions at the feet of the hero of our age, has wished personally to kneel to the greatest prince of Europe, to be the spectator of the sublime qualities of Frederic the Great, and to be able to say *I have seen him!* I dare assure your majesty that M. de Guibert is every way worthy of paying you homage, by the profound reverence he has for you, by the extent and variety of his knowledge, by the desire he has to increase that knowledge

knowledge from the superior intelligence of your majesty, and in fine, by the possession of virtues which your majesty prefers to genius itself; by candour, moral simplicity, and the worth and dignity of his mind.

Though he makes, as is his duty, the study of his profession his particular and dearest occupation, he has applied those moments which he could steal from this study to letters, and philosophy, with the utmost success. He comes in search of the model and arbitrator of all those talents which nature usually distributes among various great men, and he is worthy, sire, to admire in you the general, the writer, the monarch, and the philosopher. After having submitted his military essays to your majesty's inspection, he would venture, did he not fear intruding upon time so precious, to make you the judge of essays of a different kind, but in which your majesty's lessons would be equally instructive. He has written a tragedy, the subject of which is the Constable Bourbon; and he would think himself highly flattered, should the author of the poem on the Art of War be pleased to hear it read. It is not, sire, for a humble and timid mathematician to anticipate your majesty's judgment, on this tragedy; but I own I have been much deceived in the pleasure it has given me,

me, should not those great and virtuous sentiments with which it abounds acquire M. de Guibert the esteem, and favour, of your majesty.

One of the most flattering marks of bounty your majesty can bestow on him will be to permit him to be a spectator of those learned manœuvres which render the Prussians so formidable, and so famous. I have read, I know not where, that an officer of the army of Darius, some years after the battle of Arbela, repaired to the court of Alexander, and requested that great prince would suffer him to see the Macedonian troops manœuvre that had taught his master repentance; and that the victor at Arbela made the officer of Darius * such an answer as Alexander *the Great* ought to have made—*“Come, and see.”* The officer, after having admired the beautiful and grand machine, taking leave of the monarch, said—“I have seen the springs and wheels; but the art of setting them in motion is a secret known only to genius. Here only shall I find him to whom Nature has imparted this secret; and, unfortunately for the king of Persia, my master, he cannot obtain him for a general.”

I ought not to forget to inform your majesty

* M. D'Alembert related an anecdote from memory, and did not trouble himself concerning strict accuracy. Darius died the year after the battle of Arbela. T.

that

that M. de Guibert, while coming to Prussia to admire and to be informed, is particularly desirous that every minute trace of reproach, which a phrase in his book merited from your majesty, may be effaced. He declares all Europe renders justice to the generally acknowledged valour of the Prussian troops; and, were he to think otherwise, his shame would be the greater because of its singularity. Yet he will venture to tell your majesty, were he even in danger of contradiction, that it is his opinion the success of these brave troops is less due to their courage than to the superior talents by which it has been directed. He will even venture to add, once again perhaps at the risk of your displeasure, he is persuaded our poor Gauls, however wretched their appearance at Rosbach, would have been victors, had they only exchanged generals with the Prussians. Mathematics, fire, which understands nothing of the manœuvres of war, but which is well acquainted with calculation, will be free enough to wager on the side of M. de Guibert. After having won, as she flatters herself she should, she would repeat to those generals the saying of Louis XIV, to the duke de Vendome, the victor at Villa Viciosa—"We had only one man too many for them."

I am, &c.

L E T.

LETTER CVI.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, July 30, 1773.

M. DE GUIBERT is penetrated with gratitude, by the bounty with which he has been received by your majesty. This bounty will, if possible, increase the sentiments he so long has felt for your person, and will in his eyes crown those virtues and talents he so much admires. I warmly participate in the gratitude of M. de Guibert, however persuaded I may be that, since your majesty has seen him, he is in no farther need of recommendation. Yet is he far from being as well satisfied with himself as your majesty appears to be with him, which does but add to his merit. “ Though this hero (thus
“ he writes to me) received me with kindness sufficient to have inspired me with courage, I could not, when I saw him, shake off
“ an agitation which would not suffer me to
“ reply, as I wished, to the questions he was
“ pleased to ask. A kind of magic cloud came
“ over my eyes. This is, I imagine, what is
“ called the glory, round the heads of our calendar saints, and the radiance of a great man.”

I am persuaded that your majesty, when you shall again see M. de Guibert, will be confirmed in the good opinion you have conceived of him, and which I was very certain you would conceive. I am very desirous to know your majesty's thoughts, concerning his tragedy; and I own I shall be greatly deceived if you do not listen to the work with pleasure, and with esteem for the author.

I wait with still greater impatience to hear of your majesty's health, which appears to strengthen by your increasing success and fame. I have no doubt but you will soon crown this immortal glory, by bestowing on Russia and Poland, and on the Turks themselves, Turks though they are, that peace of which they have so much need, and which it was not your fault that they did not sooner enjoy. Your majesty will then add to the title of hero, which you so long have merited, that of pacificator, which you will obtain, in despite of the efforts of envy to deprive you of this honour.

The pleasantry of the last letter your majesty was pleased to write to me is a precious proof of your health, which is so dear to me and multitudes. When I feel myself tempted to quarrel with Nature, for having given me so frail and gloomy a habitation, I pardon her by recollecting

lecting that she preserves your majesty ; and in a whisper to myself, exclaim—" Silence ! Be contented ; the hero is in good health !" May you, sire, long write such verses as those you have had the goodness to send me, even though the impertinently curious, that have incited your majesty's anger, should think them so excellent as to take copies ! Nor can I think these insolent people, though they themselves may resemble M. von Haren, and like him vaunt they have no imagination, are such blockheads as not to admire the imagination so evident in this poetry. Your majesty never can bestow that eulogium on your verses which the Dutch poet did on his, nor say of your works, like one Hardion, a stupid tutor to very respectable princesses, when speaking of some wretched performance of his own—*You will find no wit in it.* The poor man was more literally true than he imagined, and one might have been tempted to have answered him—*Of that I am convinced*—were there not danger that, by the superabundant heat of his imagination, he might have understood such an answer as a compliment.

I know not where this letter will find your majesty, yet I hope it will come to hand before the return of M. de Guibert, that your majesty may, if possible, repress that radiance which will but excite agitation anew, at his next audi-

ence. I envy him the happiness he will have, even though I myself, at again seeing your majesty, should be equally agitated. True it is, my feelings would be greatly tempered by a softer sensation, by gratitude, and that tender veneration with which I am penetrated for your majesty.

With feelings like these, I shall, to the end of life, &c.

L E T T E R CVII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, September 27, 1773.

I DO not fear abusing the bounty with which your majesty honours me, by taking the liberty occasionally to request you would bestow the like favours, on persons worthy to be introduced to you. Of the number of these is the comte de Crillon, a colonel in the service of France, who will have the honour to present this letter to your majesty. The admiration and reverence with which he is penetrated for great men, and the high value he sets on the happiness of approaching them, make him desirous of rendering his respectful homage to Frederic the Great; not to satisfy a vain curiosity,

city, but to listen, gain instruction, and derive knowledge from that source to which all Europe repairs for information. The honourable name he bears, a name dear to all worthy and noble minds, would be a sufficient recommendation to the hero whose kindness he hopes to obtain; but to this estimable name the comte de Crillon adds other merits, which are personal, and such as are better calculated to gain the approbation of a philosophic monarch. His knowledge is uncommon, for a person of his age. His love for the sciences, literature, and study, is ardent. He has a profound contempt for the trifles which occupy, and so greatly degrade, most of the higher order of French nobility. His manners are polite, his simplicity of morals finds few equals, in people of his rank; and to his candour and virtues are added a just, prudent, and cultivated mind.

Such, sire, is the comte de Crillon, who I have no doubt will be received as graciously as he hopes to be, will be permitted to pay his court to you, during his abode in Prussia, and will justify all I have written. Your majesty will perceive in him a descendant worthy of his illustrious ancestors, and destined to tread in their steps. Henry IV. bestowed the epithet of brave, on one of the Crillons, and this is become, as it

were, his proper name. I hope your majesty, when acquainted with the gentleman I have the honour to mention, will call him the sage and virtuous Crillon. Such epithets will be inferior to none; especially if bestowed by you.

The comte de Crillon might perhaps enumerate other titles to respect, derived from his family, in which courageous and virtuous actions are hereditary. His father, the duke de Crillon, it was who commanded seventeen companies of French grenadiers, at the bridge of Weissenfels, whose valour merited the praises of your majesty. The duke de Crillon personally deserved, on this occasion, the gratitude of all who interest themselves in the preservation of great men, by an action worthy of his ancestors. He had placed two officers in a small island, who observed your army, while the bridge was burning. One of the two, to whom it had been recommended to remain concealed, came from his hiding place to inform the duke that, if he pleased, he could kill a general, whom he believed to be the king of Prussia, from the respect which was paid him by the officers. This the duke forbade, but he knew not that he was preparing an honour for his son, which he now hopes to receive, of beholding the greatest king in Europe, and
perhaps

perhaps the happiness of meeting a favourable reception.

M. de Guibert, penetrated with admiration for all which you have permitted him to see, and especially for what he has seen in your majesty, informs me in his letter that he shall, during life, preserve the most lively gratitude for the kindness with which you have deigned to receive him, and the signal favours you have been pleased to bestow. The comte de Crillon ventures to flatter himself he shall meet with equal favour. After having admired the great chief of the Prussian army, he is desirous of seeing and admiring this celebrated army itself, which is indebted to your majesty for all its worth, and which under your command has acquired immortal fame. This is a kindness I request your majesty to grant, as I before did for M. de Guibert; and I will pledge myself for an equal return of gratitude.

The first wish of my heart, on their return, is that M. de Guibert and the comte de Crillon should bring me such news as I expect, and hope, and such as will be satisfactory to the tender and profound interest I take in your preservation, happiness, and renown. This will console and encourage philosophy, which, in the various obstacles it has to encounter, has

more than ever need of your majesty, who, by your writings and knowledge, are become its chief, its support, and its example.

I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R CVIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, December 10, 1773.

ABOVE two months since, I had the honour to write a letter to your majesty, which I expected you would long since have received, and the bearer of which was the comte de Crillon, a young French officer of great merit. This he hoped he should have presented to your majesty in the month of October, but unforeseen circumstances have retarded his arrival. I expect he will now soon be at Berlin, and I previously take the liberty to request a favourable reception from your majesty, for this young gentleman, whose name, talents, and virtues, constitute his worth.

The unforeseen delay of the arrival of that letter has been the reason why I have not, for some months, written to your majesty ; not being

ing willing too often to intrude, occupied as you are, by great and little affairs. Among the latter, I rank the trick your majesty has played the cordelier, Ganganelli, by receiving his pretorian band, the Jesuits, whom he has had the folly to dismiss. I know not whether this little trick will not breed a quarrel in Paradise, and I fear lest Francis of Assise and Ignatius Loyola should come to fifty-cuffs, like the heroes of Scarron's comic romance. I very seriously hope, however, that neither your majesty nor your successors will have cause to repent, of the asylum you have granted these caballers; that they will be more faithful, in future, than they were during the last war of Silesia, as your majesty did me the honour yourself to inform me; and that, by their worthy and sage conduct, they will no longer merit the epithet of malevolent vermin, which your majesty bestowed on them, four or five years ago, in one of the letters you did me the honour to write to me.

I should be glad, at present, to ask the Jesuits what they think of philosophy, and toleration, against which they have been so violent? What would have become of them, when their order was in the agonies of death, had not Europe possessed a philosophic and tolerant sovereign? I laughed heartily at the excellent letter

of your majesty, to the abbé Colombini; and, among the rest, at the justice you did the good fathers, by affirming you knew not men who could, in every respect, better merit the title of *priests*. This reminds me of a certain very incredulous philosopher, in whose presence the company turned to ridicule I know not what proof, of what Voltaire calls * * *. “ You are “ very difficult,” replied the philosopher; “ for “ my part, I am acquainted with no better *proofs* “ than these.” Nor was my laughter less at the passage in which your majesty adds that, being in the heretical class, the holy father could not grant you any dispensation for a breach of promise. Yet cannot I forbear owning to your majesty that, while laughing, philosophy felt a momentary alarm, to see such tares preserved. Fortunately she soon recovered from her fears, by considering that the serpent at present is without a head, which the apothecary Ganganelli himself has cut away; and that, by means of this amputation, the body may supply a most excellent and medicinal viper broth, by which your majesty no doubt will profit.—Therefore, so be it.

The marquis de Puysegur is not at Paris, but I have written to inform him of your majesty's remarks. I know not what answer he can make,

to the well founded objection of your majesty, on the pretended difference between ancient and modern soldiers. Unworthy as I am to judge on such subjects, I cannot but think that the soldiers even of the cordelier would become the soldiers of Paulus Emilius, were a Frederic at their head; and that our superstitious reverence for antiquity is not better founded, when we suppose the ancients superior to the moderns, in strength of body, than it is when we suppose them superior in talents and genius.

M. de Guibert has returned full of gratitude, for the kindness with which he has been honoured by your majesty. He speaks in raptures of your person, and of all he has seen. He has but one regret, and this is a great one. He has been unable to profit by the advice your majesty might have given him, concerning his tragedy; for he rather expected advice than praise. On his passage, he visited the patriarch of Ferney, who like me has laughed heartily at the expence of the pope, and the trifling perplexity into which he has been thrown by your majesty; for, an honest pope as he is, he ought to excommunicate the Jesuits, should they obey you; and should he excommunicate them Philosophy hopes to see fine diversion. Your majesty perhaps remembers a certain battle fought in Para-

guay, by the king-jesuit Nicholas, in which the field-marshal had three capuchins killed under him *. I have told the philosopher of Ferney that your majesty, when raising this new regiment, scarcely could avoid recruiting for capuchins, to remount the corps. I only request your majesty would deprive these new foldiers of carabines; for of this disease it is said the king of Portugal fell ill.

As there is no fear your majesty should ever make a Jesuit your confessor, your general, your prime-minister, or your mistress, I think Philosophy may be wholly at her ease, concerning the use to which your majesty will put these good people; for you will render them of utility by disabling them from being dangerous. Such is the result of my reflexions, after having indulged in momentary mirth at their expence, and at seeing them dispersed by and scourged with the cord of St. Francis.

It is not many days since I have been informed of the excellent inscription, which you have put up in the catholic church of Berlin, and

* *Tués sous lui.* Whether there be any jocular anecdote alluded to, or any quibble, is more than can be known from the text; but D'Alembert means to describe the Jesuit-general astride on these capuchins who were killed under him like horses. T.

which

which is truly admirable, truly precious, to philosophy, and truly worthy of your majesty——
 FREDERIC, *qui ne bait pas ceux qui servent Dieu autrement que lui* *. This is one of the greatest and most useful lessons your majesty ever afforded to your brother kings, of the present or of a future age; a lesson by which they will certainly one day profit, whether from a principle of justice or of vanity, that they may in some manner resemble the hero of the present century. This is an inscription that well deserves to be preserved by a medal; the figures and legend for which no person can better imagine than your majesty.

Let me request your majesty to accept my most humble congratulations, on the birth of the prince who is added to your august house; the perpetuation and extent of which is always a most interesting object to me; and of this, I dare believe, your majesty is well persuaded.

One of the most estimable members of your academy, M. Bitaubé, has sent me the poem of WILLIAM, of which he is the author. I think the work interesting; the reading of it gave me pleasure. The author is desirous of rendering it more perfect, in the second edition, and has

* Frederic, who hates not those who worship God in a manner different from himself.

acquainted me with the wish, which he has signified to your majesty, of making a tour to France, that he may profit by the advice of our principal men of letters. I imagine, sire, the work might be greatly benefited; and perhaps a new edition which he has undertaken of his translation of the *Iliad*. still more so. His desire to impart all possible perfection to the work is increased, because it has been dedicated to, and has had the good fortune to please, your majesty. The enterprize is so difficult that he dares not confide wholly in himself. By attempting to give a more faithful translation, he fears lest he should injure a work that has met with applause; and, that he may avoid this rock, he thinks it necessary to consult the true judges of the language. Such, sire, are the motives that make him desirous to undertake this journey, though he is the reverse of being in love with a wandering life; and he ventures to flatter himself your majesty will cede to these reasons.

May that destiny which watches over great men preserve your majesty, during the ensuing year, and those which shall succeed! May you, by pacifying the north, be crowned with success, and perfect glory! Such are the prayers of one who will ever remain, with the most lively gratitude, the tenderest veneration, &c.

L E T.

LETTER CIX.

From the King.

December 16, 1773.

THE comte de Crillon has delivered me your Crillonade, from which I have learned the history of all the Crillons of the district of Avignon. He makes no stay here, but continues his journey to Russia, so that I must take him at your word, and suppose him the most sage of the Crillons; well persuaded that you have fathomed and calculated all his curves, as well as his angles of incidence. He will meet with Diderot and Grimm in Russia; both full of the favourable reception granted them by the empress, and the admirable things they have seen. Grimm it is said will remain in that country, which will become the asylum of the Encyclopedists and men like Chaumeix.

A dialogue of the dead has appeared here, the interlocutors of which are the Virgin Mary and Madame la Pompadour. It is attributed to various authors. If you have no copy, I will send you one; however, I am prevented from venturing to remit such a packet, because of the fear of offending your letter-visitors, or your illustrious post-office clerks.

M. de Guibert has passed by Ferney, where it is affirmed he has been converted by Voltaire; that is to say, he has renounced the errors of ambition, and has abjured the dreadful trade of mercenary executioner, to become a capuchin, or a philosopher; insomuch that he has already published a declaration, like Greffet, informing the public that, having had the misfortune to write a work on tactics, he is a penitent from the bottom of his heart, and protests he will never give rules for murder, affassination, spoil, stratagem, and like abominations. For my own part, as my conversion is not far advanced, I beg you circumstantially to relate that of Guibert, that my heart may be mollified, and I may have some bowels of compassion.

The landgravine of Darmstadt is here, on her return from Petersburg, where she has married her daughter, and is unwearied in her praises of the empress, and of the excellent institutions of that sovereign, in Russia. You see what it is to travel! We who live like rats, in our holes, can only hear of these things; and the sense of hearing is very inferior to that of seeing. In the mean time, I shall offer up prayers for the sage Anaxagoras to Urania, and say—"It is for thee to support the first of thy
" apostles,

“ apostles, and keep that light shining, deprived
 “ of which a great kingdom would fall into
 “ darkness.” To the great Demiourgos I shall
 add,—“ Mayest thou always take the good
 “ D’Alembert into thy holy keeping!”

L E T T E R CX.

From the King.

January 7, 1774.

YOU need entertain no fears for my person. There is nothing to apprehend from the Jesuits. The cordelier, Ganganelli, has pared their nails, drawn their eye-teeth, and disabled them from scratching and biting; but they may become school-masters, of which they are more capable than the whole brood of the Cuculati. I own they were guilty of tergiversations, during the last war; but reflect on the nature of clemency, which admirable virtue cannot be exercised, till we have first been offended. You philosophers will certainly not reproach me, for having treated men mercifully, and exercised humanity, indifferently toward all those of my own species, be their religion or country what they may. Believe me, we ought to practise philosophy,

losofhy, and trouble ourselves less concerning metaphysics. Good actions are more advantageous to the public than the most subtle systems, or the most acute discoveries, in which the mind is generally lost, and the truth remains undiscovered. I am not however the only person who has admitted the Jesuits. The English and the empress of Russia have done the same, and London is of the party. So much for the Jesuits.

I imagined M. de Guibert had abjured his inhuman art, in presence of Voltaire. I had not time to hear his tragedy. He told me he intended to make a tour to the north next year, that he would pass this way, and would then read his piece to me. I can only admire, and not criticise, those who are more learned than myself. Some rhymes written for my amusement, in a foreign language, ought not to render me presumptuous enough to make me suppose myself a master of the art of poetry. The composition of tragedy has to me appeared particularly difficult. I have not had courage enough to make any attempt of this kind, in which mediocrity is insufferable; and success could not be expected, unless the mind was more free from business, and interruption, than mine can be.

I have

I have read the work of Helvetius, and for his sake am sorry it has been printed. His book is destitute of logic, and contains nothing but paralogisms, reasoning in a circle, paradoxes, and complete absurdities, at the head of which the project of a French republic must be placed. Helvetius was a worthy man, but he ought not to talk of what he does not understand. Bayle would have sent him to school, to study the rudiments of logic. Yet he was one of our philosophers! Yes; one of those whom Lucian has ridiculed. The sterility of our poor age, in great men and good works, is terrible. Nothing but the lees of what did honour to the human mind, in the time of Louis XIV, remain; and they will soon disappear*.

Diderot is at Petersburg, where the empress has heaped favours upon him; yet however it is said the Russians think him a tiresome reasoner, who is continually reiterating the same

* I have, though frequently with much difficulty I own, abstained from combating any of the erroneous opinions which (among many that are true and essential to human happiness) I have to my great affliction been obliged to translate: but, lest young minds should be misled, I cannot in this place forbear observing, as a general remark, that, when the king censures the efforts that were made by Helvetius, and the best and greatest writers of France, in favour of liberty, it is generally with infinite injustice. T.

things.

things. Intrepid though I am as a reader, I cannot read any of his works through. There is a tone of self-sufficiency, and arrogance in them, at which my instinctive liberty revolts. Aristotle, Cicero, Lucretius, Locke, Gassendi, Bayle, and Newton did not write thus. Modesty is always pleasing, and is the first merit of the sage. He should reason forcibly, but should not imperiously decide. This is the consequence of being dogmatical. To speak with self-sufficiency it is supposed is to convince. The manner may be good in declamation, but is insupportable to a reader. With the book in hand, we judge of the reasons and laugh at the emphasis. In vain will the author assume false consequence; his arguments are appreciated, and reduced to their just value.

I perceive my letter is very long; I am ashamed of it, and I ask pardon. I shall add only a word; my best wishes for the preservation and prosperity of Anaxagoras for a long succession of years.

On which I pray that Nature, and the Spirit which presides over the great whole, may take you into their holy keeping.

P. S. Your Crillon is gone to hawk his wares in Russia; we have heard nothing of him for this month past.

L E T-

L E T T E R CXI.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, February 14, 1774.

I RESEMBLE the teacher of philosophy of the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* of Moliere : I, like this great philosopher, have read the learned treatise of Seneca on anger, and I grant, referring to the Jesuits, of whom your majesty is become the general, were there no culprits there could be no clemency. It is beside affirmed that the Jesuits of Poland have, by their fidelity, repaired the wrong formerly done to your majesty by the Jesuits of Silesia. Nor can your majesty do better than to resemble the Deity, who it is said wishes not the death of the sinner, that would save himself by sincere repentance. I really believe they are very repentant ; that is, they are very much vexed ; especially as your majesty, having the honour and the happiness to be a heretic, will not, as you well observe, permit them to be otherwise than useful, and never dangerous, as they have been, more than once, to princes who went to hear mass, and to confession.

Your majesty has no high opinion of Diderot, and I will not venture to contradict you. Yet,

should he pass through Berlin, I hope your majesty will permit him to approach your person. I dare affirm you will judge more favourably of the man than of his works; and that, with a fruitful imagination and much knowledge, you will discover in him mild ardour, and great amenity.

I allow, with your majesty, that there are many false and hazarded opinions, many things to be retrenched, and much prolixity, in the work of Helvetius. It may better be said to contain materials than to be a work; and many of the materials ought not to be employed. Still I cannot but think there are some useful and well-explained truths in it; and it would beside acquire additional value, in my eyes, were it only for the justice which it renders to your majesty.

I grant our age is very inferior to the age of Louis XIV, in taste and genius; but, if I do not mistake, it is superior in knowledge, the horror in which superstition and fanaticism are held, and the love of useful science; which things in my opinion have their merits.

M. de Guibert has not abjured his trade to Voltaire, lessons of which he has been taught by the works and in the provinces of your majesty. He hopes your majesty will permit him
again

again to return and admire, when circumstances shall be favourable, and allow him to receive advice from you, concerning his tragedy; a work proper to be judged by princes like yourself.

I have no doubt of all the fine things which Diderot and Grimm write of the Semiramis of the north. Yet it seems to me that these Russians, who, as I had the honour to inform your majesty some time ago, were the food of horses at Spa, begin at present to be the food of Janissaries. If your majesty should not interfere, and drive both Turks and Russians home, I doubt that at length neither Turks nor Russians will be to be found; which would be a great pity. I recollect, after the battle of Zorndorff, at which your majesty dispatched thirty thousand Russians, a fat Dane very coolly told me—"There was no harm done; it was so easy for God to make Russians."

I very much wish to read the dialogue your majesty has been pleased to mention, one of the interlocutors of which is the blessed Virgin Mary. Perhaps you might find some opportunity of sending it me, without suffering it to pass the inspection of these Cerberean curs.

The comte de Crillon is worthy the favour and esteem of your majesty, by his ardour to

gain information, his virtues, and the respect in which he holds great men. Such are the sentiments you inspire, with which I shall all my life, with the most lively gratitude, &c.

L E T T E R CXII.

From the King.

March 11, 1774.

YOU may be perfectly pacified, respecting the Jesuits, who are no longer Jesuits, in Prussia. They are more necessary than you suppose, in France, for the education of youth, in a country in which teachers are scarce, and in which they would with difficulty be found among the laymen, especially in West Prussia. I am very glad to hear you are of my opinion, that clemency can only be exercised by offence having been first given.

I am very much astonished at the remedies employed by the king of Sardinia for his flux*, and imagine it to be an invented tale. I have had the gout, of which I have cured myself by regimen, without invoking St. Anthony of Pa-

* *Fluxions*. Perhaps the dysentery ; perhaps a disorder in the eyes. T.

dua. A man who has employed remedies like those which it is said the king of * * * has taken, certainly is not formed for the society of M. D'Alembert and La Grange. Our academy has so little to lose that it is our duty to preserve the good members we have, and not to part with them.

We are informed by letter that Diderot and Grimm are soon to leave Petersburg. They intend to pass through Warsaw, before they come hither. I imagine they may arrive about the beginning of April, and I certainly shall see them on their passage, and write to you concerning Diderot, when I have conversed with him, with all that sincerity which you know me to possess. I could have wished, for the honour of Helvetius, he could have consulted some of his friends, previous to the publication of his work. It seems to me he formed a system, while writing his book on the Understanding, which he wished to maintain in his last work, and which has been productive of those errors which systematic works easily occasion. All endeavours to impart the character of truth to paradox are ineffectual. When Grimm passes this way, I shall see whether he will take charge of the dialogue, in which the Virgin Mary acts so conspicuous a part. I am afraid, when you read it, you will exclaim—"Is this

“all!” It can only afford a moment’s amusement.

A new pamphlet, by Voltaire, has appeared here, intitled *Le Taureau Blanc**, written with all the pleasantry and vivacity of youth. The conclusion is edificatory. The bull becomes a man, and even a monarch. Whenever he repairs the follies of which he has been guilty, the people assemble round his palace, and cry—“Long live our great king, who is no more a bull!”—If you have not the work at Paris, it may be sent you by the same channel.

I expect the unconverted De Guibert, who as well as his tragedy will be well received; nor do I doubt but the work, of which some people have spoken to me, is worthy of approbation.

The comte de Crillon has had his nose frozen at Petersburg, but by the aid of snow it has fortunately been saved. He is to return this way in the spring, taking his route through Lapland, Sweden, and Denmark. He and the prince of Salm may both happen to arrive all ice; but we will take every care in thawing them, and if possible will restore them to their natural state. I, whose temperament is not frosty, and who esteem you with great warmth, offer up my

* The White Bull.

prayers that the great Demiourgos may protect Anaxagoras.

On which I pray, &c.

LETTER CXIII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, April 25, 1774.

I HAVE no fear that the *heretofore self-said Jesuits*, as they were called by the late parliament of Paris, should by their re-establishment endanger your majesty. For what ill could they do the monarch whom the Austrians, Imperialists, French, and Swedes, united, could not dispossess of a single village? But I dread lest other princes, who are not equally able to oppose all Europe, and who have weeded this hemlock out of their gardens, should one day take a fancy to borrow a little seed, again to propagate the plant. My desire is that your majesty should, by an edict, prohibit the exportation of Jesuit-seed, which never can come to good, except in Prussia.

I know not whether M. de Guibert has been forbidden to transport his body to the North, but I am informed he will not have the honour

this year of paying his court to your majesty, as he desired and hoped. His ardent wish was again to see the admirable manœuvres of your troops, again to contemplate the Deity that gives motion to the grand machine, and to submit his tragedy of the Constable Bourbon to the judgment of the monarch, who combines the genius of Apollo and of Mars.

The comte de Crillon will be more fortunate. He will once more visit your majesty, and bring you intelligence of those Russians who ought to make peace, and those Swedes who will do well not to make war : and, what infinitely more interests me, he will bring me news from your majesty, and will again, on my behalf, pay that homage of respect, gratitude, and admiration, which I owe. I once more take the liberty to recommend the comte de Crillon to your majesty's favour, and venture to repeat that the more you know him the more you will think him worthy to be distinguished from that herd of young French nobility, which has so justly given you an ill opinion of the rest.

I am informed that Diderot is at the Hague. The *maladie du pays** hastened his return to

* *La maladie du pays* is a proverbial expression, that signifies much the same as *sick of the mother*. T.

France. I much wish your majesty could have seen and passed judgment on him, for I am persuaded he would have pleased you, by the mild ardour of his conversation, and the urbanity of his character.

I am charged to present a request to your majesty, in behalf of a young man of the greatest merit, named Villoison, whose profound knowledge has caused him to be received a member of the Academy of Belles Lettres, at Paris, before the age of twenty. He is at this age what Grotius, Petau, and Scaliger were at fifty; but with more taste and understanding. He will be exceedingly flattered, should he obtain the rank of foreign associate in the academy, which is rendered so flourishing by your majesty's protection. He has lately published a work on Homer, which all the learned regard as a miraculous effort of knowledge and labour, and which he would take the liberty to present to your majesty, did he not fear that the Greek, with the strange characters of which it is every where disfigured, should make your majesty start back at opening the book. I venture to assure your majesty that the name of this uncommon young man will not dishonour your academical list; and I request this favour in behalf of M. de Villoison.

I know not whether I have done myself the
honour

honour to mention the poem of WILLIAM to your majesty, which appears to me to be interesting and well written. The author is desirous of rendering it more perfect, by the aid of men of letters in France, who may be of great use to him, and he consequently wishes to make a journey to Paris. I am persuaded this journey will be very advantageous to M. Bitaubé, that his poem will profit greatly by it, as will the other works he intends to publish, and that he will collect literary wealth, in this city, which he will turn to excellent account, in his academical labours.

I impatiently expect the edificatory dialogue of the Virgin Mary, whom, as your majesty knows, I have ever held in the greatest devotion.

I have read the *Taureau Blanc*, which your majesty has been pleased to mention, and which has excited much laughter. The king who is no longer a bull, the prophets metamorphosed into magpies which speak better after the change, and a thousand other fallies of humour, are inconceivable from a man of eighty, and who has written the *Henriade* and *Alzire*. We must exclaim with Terence, *Homo homini quid præstat!* What difference between man and man! This proverb is more applicable to your majesty than any person. Men, who like me are in the common class, cannot hope to rise superior to
this

this class; not even by paying you homage, for that is a sentiment which they do but partake in common with the rest of their unfortunate and petty species. It is some consolation that they may find their equals, even amongst those whose crests are highest. The devotion of a certain Italian prince to St. Anthony of Padua, which I have had the honour to mention to your majesty, is very true; unfortunately for this prince it is indeed too true. The academy of Berlin is happy enough to have attained M. de la Grange, and finds no want of St. Anthony of Padua.

Your majesty no doubt has been informed that M. de la Grange has again, for the fifth or sixth time, for I have lost my reckoning, gained the prize of our Academy of Sciences, at Paris. I cannot too often congratulate myself for having procured the academy of Berlin a man of such eminent and uncommon talents; and who is even of greater estimation, for the modesty and mildness of his character, than for his knowledge and genius.

I always too late perceive I abuse the precious time of your majesty, and I conclude by renewing my most humble assurances of the profound veneration, and inviolable attachment, with which I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXIV.

From the King.

May 15, 1774.

“CAN gall so great possess a sage’s heart!” the poor Jesuits would exclaim, did they know the contents of your letter. While they were powerful, I did not protect them; and in their downfall I only considered them as men of letters, whose equals, for the education of youth, it would be difficult to find. This great object renders them necessary to me; because, of all the catholic clergy of the country, they alone have applied themselves to letters: for which reason, let who will ask, he shall have no Jesuit from me, I being interested in keeping them to myself.

Since I wrote to you, a vast encyclopedic phenomenon, describing an ellipsis, has scorched the edge of our horizon. The rays of his light have not reached us. The astronomers of Stettin have observed and calculated his motion, the direction of which was toward Hamburg. He has been seen by the star-gazers of the Hague, whence his benign influence has been shed on the Dutch booksellers. Pompey was fortunate
enough

enough to see and hear Pofidonius, though the philosopher had the gout. For my part, I have neither heard nor seen the great Diderot, though he was in full health. But every man is not allowed to visit Athens; and that encyclopedic necessity, which determines the fate of men, apparently, has not smiled on me, because I protect the Jesuits.

Your brave Crillon, after having exhibited himself in Russia, Finland, Lapland, Sweden, and Denmark, arrived at Berlin. I imagine he must well warm himself, before he can thaw all the congealed air which he has inhaled on the road. He travels in company with a prince of Salm, who is very amiable, and has met the approbation of all the courts at which he has appeared. Your * * † may have very admirable occult qualities, but he is thought somewhat dull, and yawners only can find amusement in his society. I do not speak for myself, for judgment cannot be passed by having been once in a man's company; it is the opinion of the public, of which I am but the echo.

I shall wait with intrepidity for M. de Guibert,

† The affected lenity of omitting the name of the count, in this place, after inserting it so often, is strange. The good opinion of him whose penetration is unequal to the discovery is scarcely worth acquiring, or preserving. T.

and

and his tragedy, as long as Heaven shall grant me life, pre-disposed to applaud both, with all the ejaculations of admiration that can be exhaled from a Teutonic soul. You know father Bouhours has told us that our form is most heavily encumbered with matter. Our gross fibres must be well shaken, before they can vibrate; and, when they do, it is not with a twentieth part of the strength, the transport, the ecstasy, and the convulsions, which are felt by the soul of a French *petit-maitre*. His blood is the sparkling champagne, his nerves are more fine than a spider's web, and his sensorium is put in motion with as much ease as a weather-cock by the breath of zephyr. To such judgments should the beautiful, the elegant, and the perfect, be presented; and not to half-animated lumps of clay.

Our academy must not come under this description. It is composed of foreigners, who have a right to think, and may have some modest pretensions to understanding. Your M. de la Grange shines in a very admirable manner, by *a plus b*, which to me is as totally unintelligible as it is to the king of * * * †. I know not whe-

† In this, as in the former instance, it is impossible to conjecture why the name of the king of Sardinia should be twice omitted, after having been inserted. T.

ther the latter, at present, addicts himself to transcendent and mystic devotion ; but while duke of Savoy, he had no such thoughts. I am sorry for him, but that is all I can do ; for excessive devotion and delirium are, in my opinion, synonymous : except indeed that devotion may be the worst ; for that remains, and the delirium disappears with the fever.

But, to return to our academy, I have no doubt but the new member you mention will with pleasure be accepted. He shall be proposed to the academicians, provided with your recommendation ; and, were they to refuse him, it would be with as ill a grace as Charles XII. would have rejected an officer, furnished with the approbation of the great Condé. This is all you will at present receive from a valetudinarian, who, while life shall remain, will interest himself in the fortune and prosperity of the modern Anaxagoras.

On which I pray, &c.

LET-

L E T T E R CXV.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, July 1, 1774.

THE last letter your majesty did me the honour to write, you were on the eve of departure for your reviews, which I now suppose are ended, and your majesty is returned to your philosophic retreat, into which for a moment I shall obtrude, to renew my profound respect, and lively gratitude.

A great event has happened among us, since the last letter I had the honour to write to your majesty, of great consequences from which, political, civil, moral, literary, philosophic, and especially æconomical, we are in expectation. Much is promised, and much is wanted. This event is the inoculation of the king and the royal family, which a month since we were far from hoping, and which proves that the voice of reason is heard. This at once affords us happy prospects and good example. Heaven preserve us from wars, fanatics, and knaves, and all will do well!

I do not think France will ever send to ask Jesuits from your majesty. I very much pity
catholic

catholic Germany, that it should possess no better persons, for the instruction of youth, than those ignorant caballers. Your majesty does not do me justice, if you imagine I have any gall in my heart against them. On the contrary, no voice was heard louder than mine, exclaiming against the barbarity with which some individuals among them were treated, in France. But it is my wish that, while rendering individual Jesuits as happy as they can be in retirement, the means should never be supplied them to revive in a body; especially in a country where such revival must be dangerous, and where they never were any thing but dangerous. Were each sovereign a Frederic, I should behold Europe paved with Jesuits, without apprehension, or care. But Frederics pass away, and Jesuits remain.

I am sorry that the encyclopedic phenomenon, which your majesty has done me the honour to mention, has only grazed the horizon of Berlin. I am persuaded, had your majesty observed it at a less distance, you would have found it worthy some attention. My earnest exhortation was that it should suffer itself to be seen, by the greatest astronomer of our age; and I affirmed that the lens of this astronomer were very benignant, though very exact. It was in awe of the astronomer, and I am sorry; for I am con-

vinced the astronomer would not have been dissatisfied with his observations, and that he would have done me the honour to have said—"I find all that you told me of the encyclopedic phenomenon true."

Young Crillon is not so great a phenomenon, but I dare assure your majesty he has his worth; and I could have very much desired your majesty should have judged for yourself. If the Russians thought him dull, so much the worse for them that they were Russians. I wish it were proper for me to impart the contents of a letter, which he has written to me, to your majesty, and in which he has given a detail of all he observed in your states. Not that I would answer the Russians should be as well satisfied with this letter; for he certainly does not think or speak of them as he does of your majesty.

Your majesty will neither listen to M. de Guibert nor to his tragedy this year; and it appears to me, from the manner in which you have been pleased to mention him, that you will wait with great resignation for both. I thought you did not seem dissatisfied with this gentleman, at least personally; and I imagined your majesty would think as favourably of his piece. I perceive with a kind of affliction that, for some time past, your majesty has been but little favourable

vourable to the French nation. I allow that, in many respects, the disgrace is not unmerited; and no person sees more clearly than I do the atrocities, and absurdities, of every kind, which dishonour my dear country. But God said he would pardon Sodom, could only ten just men be found in it; and I do not think France is yet reduced to this degree of indigence, and dearth. Though father Bouhours may have said a foolish thing, this may well be pardoned: we take as little pleasure as your majesty, in the decisions and writings of father Bouhours.

M. de Villoison commissions me to lay his profound respect, and lively gratitude, at your majesty's feet. He, like me, impatiently waits the new honour your majesty is pleased to confer on him, in admitting him of your academy.

I am, with every sentiment of respect, gratitude, and admiration, which will end only with life, &c.

L E T T E R CXVI.

From the King.

July 28, 1774.

YOU have well divined; I have been returned these three weeks from my peregrinations, and have enjoyed the pleasure of the company of the dutchess of Brunswick, to whom I have caused the Duc de Foix and Mithridate to be read, by Aufrene*. I was informed, before my departure, of the death of Louis XV. by which I was sincerely affected. He was a good prince, and a worthy man; his only defect was that he was placed at the head of a nation the sovereign of which ought to possess more activity than he had received from nature. If some errors were committed, during his reign, they must rather be attributed to his ministers, than to himself. At present, public malevolence is unbridled, against this good prince. Let the restlessness of the French beware, lest it should bring on them the punishment of the frogs in the fable. This however is not what they have to

* *A laquelle j'ai fait entendre le Duc de Foix et Mithridates, déclamés par Aufrene.* Perhaps, and most probably, Aufrene played the two characters. T.

fear.

fear. Miracles are related of Louis XVI. The whole empire of the Gauls is chanting his praise. The secret to find approbation in France is novelty. Weary of Louis XIV. the nation was prone to insult his funeral obsequies; and Louis XV. in like manner, has lived too long. The duke of Burgundy acquired a good character, because he died before he ascended the throne; as did the late dauphin, for the same reason. To satisfy the French, they ought to have a new king once in two years. Novelty is the goddess of your nation; and, be the sovereign as good as he will, the Gauls will endeavour to discover his defects, and absurdities; as if a king were not a man!

“What man is without error; and what king
 “without foibles?” Were I M. de Sartines, I should paste up this sentence in all public places, and at the corner of every street. The princes who were our predecessors, we ourselves, and those who shall succeed us, are imperfect; each is a mixture of good and ill qualities. None but your Lord’s vicegerent, seated on the city of the Seven Hills, is infallible; and so supposed to be by those of robust faith. For my part, whose faith is frail and flight of make, like the duke de Nivernois, when I contemplate a tyrant, a barbarian, and an incestuous hypocrite,

like Alexander VI. I find it difficult to acknowledge his infallibility; and I rank your porters of Paradise on a level with other men, and a hundred degrees below philosophers.

Reflections like these, drawn from a knowledge of the human heart, are productive of indulgence, and of that support which men mutually owe each other, and which leads toward toleration. For these reasons, your enemies, the Jesuits, are tolerated by me. They have made no use of their daggers, in the provinces where I afford them protection; but have confined themselves to their colleges, in which they have taught the belles lettres. And is this a reason for persecution? Shall I be accused for not having exterminated a society of men of letters, because some individuals of that society have been guilty of crimes, at the distance of two hundred leagues from my kingdom? The laws condemn the guilty to punishment; but, at the same time, they condemn that atrocious and blind rage which, in its vengeance, confounds the guilty and the innocent. Accuse me of too much toleration, and I shall glory in the defect. It were to be wished sovereigns could not be reproached with any other errors.

So much for the Jesuits. As to the comte
de

de Crillon, do not vex yourself concerning what I have written of him; I believe him to be exceedingly virtuous, and such as you have described. I am not rash enough to judge of the merit of a foreigner, of whom I have no knowledge. I did but repeat the public opinion, and what has been written of him from Peterfburg, Denmark, and other places, which he visited on his journey.

I am far also from conceiving M. de Guibert to be one of the herd of men. He is a sprouting hero, who perhaps may one day be the favour of France, and make the world resound with his exploits. These are among possibilities, and consequently may be. As to his tragedy, I have not heard a word of it; though I think it most excellent, on the faith of a christian. D'Alembert has taste, he has approved the drama, and I ought not to deviate from his creed.

I know not what to say of the invisible Diderot. He resembles those celestial beings of which we continually speak, but never see. I lately happened to open one of his books, and cast my eye on these words—"Young man, take, and read."—On which I immediately shut it again, well comprehending that it was not written for me, I being more than sixty

years of age. Letters from Petersburg tell us that the empress ordered him a coat and a wig, because he was dressed in so strange a manner that, till he was thus adorned, he could not appear at court.

Should this apology be still insufficient, to make you believe me a good Frenchman, I shall add, for my own justification, that I greatly admire the Gauls, when they have common sense, and understanding; that I have a very high opinion of Turenne, Conde, Luxemburg, Gassendi, Bayle, Boileau, Racine, Bossuet, and even Deshoulieres, who are gone; and of Voltaire, and D'Alembert, who are living. But, my admiring faculties being confined to certain limits, it is impossible I should comprise, among these my acts of veneration, the abortions of Parnassus, the philosophers of paradoxes and sophisms, would-be wits, generals continually vanquished and never victorious, painters without colouring, ministers without probity, &c. &c.—Having made my confession, condemn me if you can; in which case I will obtain absolution from Aretine, who far from admiring passed his whole life in finding fault.

I know not whether Paris may be compared to Sodom, or Sodom to Paris; but it is very certain I shall never have any inclination to
burn

burn either place. I shall say, with the angel Ithuriel, if all be not well, all is passable.

Live happy and contented, under the reign of the sixteenth Louis. Let philosophy contribute to your mirth. This is the greatest good you can expect from it, and this is what I sincerely wish you.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R CXVII.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, September 12, 1774.

I IMAGINE your majesty is at this moment more than ever occupied; and I fear being an intruder, by writing this letter. The peace which is lately concluded, between Russia and the most sublime and most contemptible Porte, must involve your majesty in more than one important affair. However pacific Philosophy may be, I know not whether she have yet any cause to rejoice at the peace, till she be well assured that the tranquillity of Europe will not be disturbed by it; for, if war there must be, she would be better pleased to see war between the Turks and Russians, than between nations
more

more worthy to profit by the advantages of peace.

It is affirmed our young monarch is no more a friend to war than his grandfather was, whom he in that resembles; and all France blesses this propensity in the king, necessary as it is to the people. Your majesty is an example of this propensity, whatever may be said by those who are unacquainted with you, and who will not understand that, the more a monarch hates war, the better prepared is he to make war with superiority. But not so the king whom we have lost, and concerning whom your majesty thinks with so much truth and justice. He wanted fortitude, which defect was the cause of the misfortunes of his reign: had he possessed that virtue, he would have been an excellent prince.

His successor, who has only been four months on the throne, discovers a decided intention to do good, and to have none but honest men for his ministers. This appears from every choice he has hitherto made. He has in particular appointed one of the most enlightened and most virtuous men in the kingdom his comptroller general*; and, if good should not be the result, we must conclude good is an impossibility. The ministers he has dismissed were held in

* The truly great and good M. Turgot.

T.
horror,

horror, by the nation; and their removal has occasioned universal joy. Other great knaves, though in a subaltern station, but possessed of important places, have been expelled from office; and, as some still remain, the hopes of the public are that the king will make a clear house. I am neither an enthusiast nor a parasite, yet do I join all France in good wishes, for a prince who begins in so desirable a manner.

I shall speak no more of the Jesuits. I hope your majesty's conduct to them will teach them that toleration which they have so little practised. But, averse as I am to wish them any harm, as citizens and as men, I should be exceedingly afflicted to see them, as Jesuits, in kingdoms where they might easily be guilty of all that mischief which they dare not attempt, in your majesty's dominions.

Whatever may have been written from Russia, Denmark, Lapland, or Iceland, concerning the comte de Crillon, I take the liberty, sire, to persist in my former opinion of him; and I am only sorry that the great Frederic has not seen enough of him, to render him that justice which persons whose judgments are of so little worth have refused.

Your majesty is acquainted with M. de Guibert; and, as the Russians and Icelanders have

not

not written any thing to his disadvantage, I am the more tranquil, respecting the opinion I gave of him, after knowing that which your majesty has been pleased to give. He was very desirous of returning to gain instruction, in Prussia ; but the duke d'Aiguillon, for the best or worst of possible reasons, has not thought proper to grant permission.

I shall say little concerning the Gauls, for I allow that the remarks of your majesty are but too true. Yet do I believe that our follies, and frivolity, are more the consequences of government than of national character. What perhaps will astonish your majesty is that, during the six weeks which the theatres were shut up in Paris, from the beginning of May to the fifteenth of June, no one regretted them, nor even thought of them ; because the public were occupied by great hopes, from the new reign, which the king begins to realise. So true is it, if I am not mistaken, that the Gauls only want great objects on which they may fix their attention with more gravity than they usually seem capable of, in order to render them less frivolous, and more rational.

I conclude with reproaching myself for the moments of which I have robbed your majesty ; wishing you health, peace, and happiness ; for,

as to glory, you have as much as you can desire of every kind, and enough to render a crowd of kings famous.

M. de Catt will give your majesty an account of what I have done, respecting the statuary, who desires to enter your service; and I will not weary your majesty with the subject.

I am, with the most profound respect, &c.

LETTER CXVIII.

From the King.

October, 1774.

MY occupations are not so considerable as you suppose. They are diminished, in part, by the conclusion of peace with the Turks. And, after all, man is born for labour; indolence not only renders him miserable but often criminal. You have no cause to fear new troubles should arise in the north, or in the west of Europe. Those who envy us believe all their reveries to be realities, and publish their absurdities; but it is as necessary to be on our guard against political as against theological folly. If your monarch love peace as much as you suppose, he may afford proofs, by tranquillizing his neighbours,

bours, and pacifying the dissensions which are fomenting in the south of Europe. He appears to be cautious and sage in his proceedings : and to possess qualities which are only the result of long experience at his age is a thing very uncommon.

A poem has appeared here entitled *Louis in the Elysian Fields*, which you may have already seen at Paris, and in which Louis is equitably judged by Minos. It is a sport of the imagination, and perhaps it is against the etiquette to sport on the death of a great monarch ; but every opportunity is caught at, by those who seek their own amusement.

I shall say no more of the comte de Crillon, whom I respect and honour as a valiant knight. Confess however that a man may possess good qualities and yet be tinctured with dulness. He travelled in company with the prince of Salm, who is really amiable. The prince attracted every person's notice, and his conversation was sought, while the other was left to his profound meditations. It was necessary to dig to find the hidden treasures of your Crillon, and it is not every body who loves to dig ; especially when it is a bird of passage *. All the harm that can happen

* *Dig* and *bird of passage* is one of the disjointed metaphors which

pen to me will be, I shall have only imperfectly known the comte de Crillon.

I have heard the praises of M. Turgot, who is said to be an honest, an assiduous, and a sage man. So much the better for your poor peasants, whose burthens, if he have any compassion, he will lighten. A proper choice of ministers is no doubt the most important duty of the sovereign; but the reign of a monarch must not be estimated by so short a period as three months. I collect the acts of your sixteenth Louis, and, should I live two or three years longer, I may then be able to say what I augur of his reign. I recollect the prophecies of Voltaire, concerning the king of Denmark, which did not happen to be very fortunate. The best way is to prophesy after your hero is dead.

I here send you the attestation of the conduct of a young officer, which Voltaire has asked. I know not what use is intended to be made of it, but it is given by the governor of Wesel; and, as it is in German, I send a translation, authenticated according to the original. Catt is afflicted with cholic, lassitude, dysentery, quinsy, hæmorrhoides, spasms in the bladder, and I know

which occasionally occur, to perplex a translator; and render him unable to decide, whether he ought to prefer good taste or rigid veracity, in his version.

not how many more diseases. He has not said a word to me of the statuary, I am therefore wholly ignorant of the subject. My wishes are for your health, prosperity, and preservation.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R CXIX.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

October 31, 1774^o

M. GRIMM, who has been returned a few days, has remitted me a dialogue, on the part of your majesty, between two ladies who, each in turn, made her fortune in a very grand and unexpected style; who both were virgins, one as good as the other; as good maids as the maid of Orleans herself. I was much diverted by the dialogue; and this has incited a desire in me to read another dialogue, in verse, which your majesty did me the honour to mention, in a letter you wrote to me. I have no doubt but the grand signor plays his part in it, and the grand queen (for such she had the honour to be, and who has enjoyed the dignity still more grand of having her name inserted in the high genealogy, the authority of which indeed is somewhat

somewhat suspected) I have no doubt, I say, that these two illustrious interlocutors will speak entirely in character.

I should be much better pleased to read this dialogue, than to be ruminating as I am, at this moment, concerning dissensions fomenting in the south of Europe, which your majesty has been pleased to mention. I in my retreat am ignorant of the quarrels of kings. I wish they were all as pacific as your majesty, and at the same time as well prepared for war, by which preparation it may best be avoided. God preserve us from this scourge! May he at least give M. Turgot, our new comptroller-general, time to repair the evils under which we long have groaned. With good reason has he been praised to your majesty, for he certainly is one of the best informed, most laborious, and just men in the kingdom; whose probity is incorruptible, and whose virtue can withstand all temptation; of which he has afforded more than one proof, during the two months that he has administered our finances. As the king appears to love justice, truth, and worthy people, and to detest priests, knaves, and hypocrites, I hope he will daily acquire more confidence in that enlightened and virtuous man. This is the wish

of all France ; for the happiness of the people, and the glory of the king.

It is said our monarch means to recal the parliament, which his predecessor had banished. That which had been substituted was far from being sufficiently select, to obtain the confidence and public respect which magistrates ought to enjoy. The former parliament was open to very serious reproach ; but it is to be hoped that the disgrace in which it has been, for four years, will render it reasonable and sage. The fanatics groan to hear of its return ; and this is a reason why it should no longer be superstitious and fanatic, as it has but too often been.

I have written to inform M. de Voltaire that your majesty has been kindly pleased to send a certificate, favourable to M. d'Etallonde, for which he seemed to wait with impatience. To render justice to the conduct of this young man, who has been so cruelly persecuted, is an act worthy of your majesty ; and I do not despair but that such a certificate may, at length, procure him happiness.

All our letters, from Rome and Italy, affirm that the death of the pope is a master-piece of jesuitical pharmacy. Could not your majesty found a professorship for these honest people, in their college, at Breslau, to teach an art in which
they

they appear to be so well skilled? The election of the successor to Clement XIV. will to them be an event of the utmost importance; but I have no doubt but that the catholic princes, who are so well aware of the scientific art of the society, will combine to induce the pope to bestow this treasure on princes who do not go to mass, and who, in taking the sacrament, need not fear the fate of the poor emperor, to whom brother Sebastian, of Montepulciano, gave so satisfactory a repast.

I am afflicted to hear of the ill state of health of poor De Catt, who is a faithful servant to your majesty, and well worthy of that interest you take in his misfortunes. I wrote to him circumstantially, relative to the statuary, that I might not importune your majesty. This artist has determined to go to Berlin, at his own expence and risk, that he may have the honour of offering his services to your majesty, and of making those proposals which he is desirous to obtain, at entering your service. He will be on the road when your majesty shall receive this letter, and will soon after arrive.

I am, with most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R CXX.

From the King.

November 15, 1774.

I HAVE been the more sorry for the illness of De Catt because his disease is of so singular a kind. The hæmorrhoides would not flow, and reduced him to the condition of Tiresias, without the interference of any goddesses. The surgeons, who condemn diseases as they do goddesses, pretend they can cure him by the application of cantharides, and he again begins to see; but his cure is not yet complete. Perhaps the virgin has punished him, for having copied a certain dialogue; in which case I am, in part, the cause of his disaster. The nonsense which I occasionally send you has no other merit than that of amusing the writer, and making the reader laugh. This is the hobby-horse of my old age, on which I sometimes merrily mount.

I know not what I may have written to you, concerning the troubles that threaten the South; but I must leave prediction to Tiresias. A poor hermit as I am, in a corner of the North, I know not what will happen to-morrow, much less at a more distant period.

Your

Your young monarch acts sagely, and I particularly admire his desire to do good, which is all that can at present be expected. He has an arduous task to accomplish, nor can he perform his duties but by making himself well acquainted with things, and studying minutiae, which will appear to him foreign and novel, considering the education he has received. Whether the old parliament return, or the new remain, I shall continue neuter, and shall not decide till I have first seen the sum total of good, or ill, which shall be the result. We acataleptics are not hasty in our judgments. We are convinced that our reasonings are often deceitful, and that no subject can be fully discussed. As a deduction from this reasoning, I request you not too suddenly to give faith to the calumnies which are rumoured against our good fathers. Nothing can be more false than the current report of the poisoning of the pope. He was exceedingly chagrined that, when announcing the restitution of Avignon to the cardinals, he received no congratulations; and that intelligence so interesting, to the holy see, should be heard with so much coolness. A girl prophesied that he should be poisoned, on such a day. But do you believe this girl was inspired? The pope did not die in consequence of this prophecy, but because the juices were en-

tirely exhausted. He was opened, and not the least indication of poison discovered. But he reproached himself with his weakness, in having sacrificed an order, like that of the Jesuits, to the caprices of his rebellious children. During the latter part of his life, his temper was morose and hasty; which, with the debaucheries he was guilty of, contributed to shorten his days. Thus are the Jesuits justified; and what remains of them will have no need of an arsenal for poniards, nor of pharmacy for deadly potions.

After having offered an apology for the innocence of these priests, I may well be permitted to add that of the poor officer, which I have addressed to you. I do not expect any attention will be paid to it, but we must nevertheless do our duty. Abominable superstition is more rooted in France than in any other country of Europe. Your bishops and priests do not usually forego their gripe, nor will they be converted by reason. That necessity which obliges them not to persecute is the only mode of reducing them to toleration. I sincerely wish my letter might be opened, and read, by your archbishop. He would bless God that Providence had not thought proper to place me on the throne of the Gauls, and his love for Louis XVI. would increase.

Our

Our tranquillity here is perfect, and I flatter myself this happy state may continue, provided men are prudent. Peace is the mother of arts, to cultivate which the temple of Janus ought to be shut. This is the period at which your statuary should come hither. The works which I have seen by him are elegant, and in a good taste. He will immediately find employment, on his arrival; and, provided his head be as sage as his hands are intelligent, we shall agree very well.

If you want poetry, here is some for you; a new-year's gift, which may amuse you for a moment, and no more. I hear nothing concerning your health, whence I conclude it is good: preserve it carefully, for it is the only true wealth we can enjoy. No man interests himself more for the preservation of Protagoras than the philosopher of Sans Souci.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R CXXI.

From the King.

December 14, 1774.

THE statuary is arrived, with a letter which he brings from you. We shall make our bargain, and he will not want work. I am obliged to you for the choice. Such performances of his as I have seen are excellent; and, from what you say, I will believe his brain to be better organized than that of his predecessor. If obliged to choose, I should prefer a tranquil mind, with inferior abilities, to a more able artist, with a perpetually restless spirit, which disturbs all with whom it has any intercourse. Peace is at my age the thing most desirable. At this period of life we feel a dislike for whatever troubles our repose.

Grimm, who is young, thinks otherwise. I imagine he is determined to seek great adventures. I did not expect he possessed my portrait in porcelain; I was even ignorant that any such existed. To be painted, we ought to be either Apollo, Mars, or Adonis; and, as I have not the honour to be any one of the three, I have concealed my face from the brush as much as I could,

could. If however you wish to have this porcelain, I will cause a small parcel to be made up, at Berlin, and will send it you in the best condition possible.

Tiresias begins to recover his sight. His organs have not been vitiated. His disease was occasioned by the ardour of his blood, which was thrown with impetuosity into the head, by the suppression of the hæmorrhoides. Such are the accidents to which unhappy man is subject. Who shall tell us then that philosophy is unnecessary, in one of the worst of worlds of this system? It is exceedingly necessary, but rather in practice than speculation. The first is a want, the second a luxury. Pardon me this assertion, my dear Pythagoras, remembering the esteem I have for you.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R CXXII.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, December 15; the anniversary
of the Battle of Kesselfdorf.

IT must have been, nor have I any difficulty in believing it, that all the clerks of all the post-offices of Germany, exclusive of those
of

of France, have had the curiosity to read the verses which your majesty did me the honour to send me; for the packet which contained those verses, and the letter of the 15th of November which accompanied them, did not arrive till three weeks after their date. This delay, added to the rheumatism, which for some days has deprived me of the use of my right arm, prevented me from returning my most humble and sincere thanks to your majesty, for the charming lines you have been pleased to send. They are full of poetry, imagination, and poignant, philosophic satire, on all the disorders of which we unfortunate Gauls have been the spectators, and the victims. This satire has a merit very uncommon, in works of such a kind. It does not exaggerate; it neither passes the bounds of justice, nor of truth. I have read and shall read it, again and again, with the greatest pleasure. To give such lessons to your equals is an honour which appertains only to your majesty.

I am enchanted at the good opinion which your majesty appears to have entertained for our young king; which he daily justifies by new acts of equity and benevolence. I probably never shall approach him, nor certainly shall I ever have any favour to ask; but I shall offer
up

up my prayers for his preservation. Nor can I forbear to remark how fortunate it is for humanity that, of all the family of the Bourbons, the two princes most worthy to reign, are precisely those who at present hold the sceptre; the kings of France and Spain. The heart of our king is upright, and virtuous; nor do we fear he should be seduced by priests, or knaves; we are only in dread of hypocrites, who may assume the mask of virtue. But fortunately these hypocrites so foolishly discovered themselves, by their scandalous conduct, during the illness of the late king, that we are persuaded the young prince is well acquainted with them, and will not be entangled in their snares. Nothing can equal the indignation of all France, against those tutors who have educated our monarch, with negligence so great that it is with himself a subject of complaint! It is to be hoped he never will grant them his confidence.

We are in expectation of a pope, and we hope he will leave no Jesuits, except in the states of your majesty, since you are pleased to suffer them there to remain. I am not astonished that your majesty will not believe the poor pontiff has been poisoned, for you certainly would not keep such able apothecaries a moment; but all our news from Italy is so positive, and so circum-

circumstantial, on the subject, as not to leave a possibility of doubt. Your majesty does me the honour to ask if I believe the girl inspired. I flatter myself you know me well enough not to suspect I should give faith to such inspiration; but I can very voluntarily believe that the knaves, who caused her to predict the death of the pope, had previously taken their measures, or were well determined to take them, that the prediction might be verified. Therefore, with your majesty's permission, I shall continue to exclaim, like Cato, "Let Carthage be destroyed!" Yet I shall add, the poisoners if discovered excepted, it would be barbarous to reduce to wretchedness and despair the people who inhabited Carthage; and that it is a duty to render men, who would have been ambitious and intriguing Jesuits, good and worthy citizens.

I hope the statuary will be arrived when your majesty shall receive the letter I have now the honour to write. I have every reason to believe your majesty will be as well satisfied with him, personally, as you appear to be with his talents, and works. He is a good honest Fleming, whose greatest passion will be to render himself worthy of your majesty's favours. He should by this have delivered a letter to your majesty, in which I have earnestly requested a favour
7 which

which I entreat you not to refuse. This is that you would be pleased to grant me your portrait in porcelain, of your fine Berlin manufacture, similar to the small portrait, which is exceedingly beautiful and an excellent likeness, that I have seen in the possession of M. Grimm. This portrait will be to me the most precious new-year's gift I ever during life received, and the dearest present with which your majesty can gratify and honour me.

I labour with all possible zeal to obtain justice for the officer, concerning whom your majesty interests yourself. In conjunction with some worthy friends, as zealous as myself but with greater influence, I have already taken steps which I hope will not be ineffectual; but time and prudence are necessary to bring the affair to a happy conclusion. When this time shall come, I shall plead, if I think it necessary, the interest which your majesty is pleased to take in it; and I hope your name will be of *some weight* in the scale.

Permit me, sire, with your usual goodness, to present my best wishes at the beginning of the coming year in your behalf. This, if I do not mistake, is the thirty-sixth of your glorious reign, and which increases the sentiments of admiration, gratitude, and profound respect, with which I am, &c.

L E T-

L E T T E R CXXIII.

From the King.

January 6, 1775.

I SHOULD be much flattered, were I certain that my bad verses had for a moment amused you. I imagine they have been read by the clerks of the post-office, because they are in the habit of opening letters. The present will not be opened, for Tassart, with whom the contract is signed, will deliver this, and another of older date, of which he is the bearer, to you. I congratulate the French, at having reason to be satisfied with their king, and wish they may always have such kings. The post of this monarch is a difficult one, for he has to counteract thousands of men, whose purpose it is to dupe and pervert. Should he escape some, it will be strange should he not be intrapped by others. But, when the intentions of the sovereign are just and the heart good, greater indulgence should be granted kings than other men, who, being less exposed to snares, may with more ease avoid them.

You insist upon it that the pope has been poisoned, but I am certain that all the letters which are written to Prussia protest against poison, and
do

do not suppose there is any thing extraordinary in the death of Ganganelli. Perhaps indeed these Italians keep false weights and scales, and write what will be most agreeable to France and what may best suit Prussia. I do not understand any thing of the affair, except that I am certain my good Silesian and Prussian fathers have not steeped their hands in such horror. I give up Carthage to your mercy; I mean that which Calvin called Babylon; the hierarchy, and all its combined superstitions. To deliver the world from this would be doing good to mankind; but neither you nor I shall see that happy day, for the coming of which ages are necessary. And perhaps old superstition shall but be banished by new; for I am persuaded that a propensity to superstition is born with man.

You shall have the portrait, which certainly is not worth the carriage, and in the workmanship of which consists its whole value.

I fear with reason lest philosophy, while protecting innocence, should be wrecked against your presidents *à mortier* who are walled in with formalities, and too obstinately attached to ancient prejudices flexibly to relax their severity. It seems that poor d'Etallonde must remain disinherited, for not having had the wit to make a bow to a dirty bit of dough, which
was

was carried in procession by a priest, in the streets of Amiens. Dreadful is it indeed when the life of man depends on such absurdities!

I not only wish you a good new year, my dear Anaxagoras, but in addition every prosperity you could wish yourself; and especially health, without which all the rest are non-entities.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R CXXIV.

From M. D'Alembert.

SIRE,

Paris, February 7, 1775.

I PROSTRATE myself at your majesty's feet. I want expressions to testify my ardent and tender gratitude. M. Taffart has brought me the superb porcelain which your majesty has done me the honour to send. I was before but too happy and too much honoured by the inkstand which, fifteen years ago, you were pleased to bestow, that very day on which you were covered with glory on the plains of Lignitz. But it is no doubt your majesty's pleasure, and in which you have committed no violence on me, that I should not only think of you, while writing,

ing,

ing, but that, every morning, while taking my frugal repast, it should be accompanied by rendering thanks, after having written on the charming box that incloses the porcelain the two words so dear to my heart—*Dedit Fredericus*.

But, if I am unable to express my feelings for so fine a present, how shall I paint my gratitude for the portrait, which your majesty has had the goodness to add? I shall bear it incessantly about me, and at night shall place it beside my pillow, where the devout place their crucifix and their holy water. I most carefully preserve the portrait your majesty was pleased to give me almost twelve years ago, and which represents you at the head of your armies. This which I have just received shows you in your cabinet, as the most amiable of philosophers, with the most august and noble countenance. The first I shall ever admire; the second I shall adore! All my friends, whom I have informed how great the resemblance of this new portrait is, have already paid it their most tender homage, and have requested copies, that they may participate my pleasure, and my happiness.

M. de Voltaire has sent me the tragedy of Don Pedro, in which are passages, and even scenes, worthy of himself. To this he has added an eulogium on reason, which in my opinion is

one of the most charming things he has written. I imagine he has sent it to your majesty. What a man ! And at the age of eighty ! But he is most occupied by the atrocious yet ridiculous affair of the young man for whom your majesty interests yourself, and who appears highly worthy of your protection, from what M. de Voltaire has written to me of his character and industry. A great number of worthy people are now busied concerning this abominable affair, which renders our Gallic judges alike odious and contemptible. Your majesty may depend on my zeal and efforts, to wash away the affront with which we have been disgraced, by that infamous sentence.

Our young king continues to make himself beloved, to act well, and in fine to afford us the most happy of prospects. His worthy acts are continually cited, as are his remarks, full of good sense and reason. He has chosen virtuous men for his ministers, and one especially, our comptroller general, who will re-establish our finances, if avarice, envy, and calumny, will suffer him to act.

I am exceedingly afflicted for the situation of poor M. de Catt, whose services, from the tender veneration which I know he entertains for your majesty, must be greatly missed.

M. Taffart

M. Tassart is delighted to enter your majesty's service, and wishes already to be at Berlin, where he would have remained had not indispensable business called him back to France. He is determined to repair to your majesty's feet, according to his promise, toward the end of July at the latest. I believe I may assure your majesty you will be well satisfied with his capacity, his works, and his character; and that you will find him more prudent, and more worthy, than most of the French artists, with whom you have had so little reason to be pleased. To complete his happiness, he has a favour to demand of your majesty; which is that, beside the work-shop which has been provided for him, you would be pleased to grant him a house or apartments for himself and his family. I have led him to hope your majesty will not refuse him this favour, not doubting but you have some such apartments at your own disposal, in your capital. This will complete the benefactions conferred by your majesty, and increase the gratitude of M. Tassart; to which mine may be added, from the interest I take in his welfare, and the certitude in which I am that your majesty will never repent having rendered the situation of this artist agreeable, and fortunate.

I am, with the most tender gratitude, and the most profound respect, &c.

L E T T E R CXXV.

From the King.

February 22, 1775.

I AM glad you are pleased with the trifles I have sent you; they will at least remind you of me when you take your coffee; and it will always be a great pleasure to me that my name may for a moment engage the attention of Anaxagoras, whose mind is occupied with the profound meditations of philosophy. I shall order it to be noticed, in my funeral oration, that the remembrance of me robbed infinitesimals of a minute; and this will be the most flattering thing that can be said of me.

I have been in company with comte Czer-nicheff, with whom I have conversed much of you, and of Louis XVI; but more however of the philosopher than of the monarch; because the one has established his reputation, and the other has his reputation to make.

The king is said to be angry with his parliament, and so am I; for I by no means love
acts

acts of atrocity added to injustice; and, I not only think these long-robed gentlemen ought to repair the wrong they have done d'Etallonde, but, I should condemn them to raise the unfortunate La Barre from the dead. All the letters I receive from Paris affirm Voltaire is soon to visit the metropolis, that the queen wishes to see him, and that the nation is to reward him for the honour which, by his writings, it has acquired. I have not seen the new works by him, which you mention; they are worthy to be sent into modern Greece, to that Athens called Paris, but neither to the Vandals nor the Ostrogoths. I shall receive them however from Holland. We have nothing here except an admirable translation of Tasso, with a very singular preface. Voltaire supports his existence in a marvellous manner; and, though his body denotes age, his mind has all the freshness and the graces of youth. But every man is not allowed, like him, to possess an immortal soul.

We have the duke de Lauzun here, and Montmorency-Laval, the most ancient baron in Europe. These are flambeaux, that come to shed light amid our Teutonic darkness. They will pass rapidly away, like comets, to return to those happy spheres in which they are fixed by

fate, and again plunge us into our native obscurity.

You Parisians will once more put on your doublets*, will have your holy vials, your consecrations, your coronation cavalcades, your festivals and admirable shews, your hair frized two and twenty inches high; and we shall only have the statuary Tassart, for whom we cannot find so much as a lodging; for I have long since given every inhabitable place to one or another. We shall find expedients however. We must build; but ground to build on will be the difficulty. This is my affair, and I will do my best. In the mean time, take care of your health, and have a noble emulation to wrestle with Voltaire; when you have passed your eightieth year, present the world with a solution of some fine mathematical problem. Such are the wishes of the hermit of Sans Souci, for his dear Anaxagoras.

On which I pray, &c.

* Alluding to the ancient dresses, still preserved in the public ceremony of the coronation. T.

LETTER CXXVI.

From the King.

March 16, 1775.

IT seeming that the porcelain of Berlin was to your taste, I have sent you a china bust of one of the most celebrated men in Europe, the merit and value of which consist in its resemblance. By this essay you will perceive that even our artists honour the talents of great men, each in their kind; and that, heavy as our good Germans are, they are yet sufficiently enlightened to render homage, where homage is due.

Whole tribes of Russians have passed through Berlin, who pretend they are on their travels, to form both heart and mind. The duke de Lauzun, who made a considerable stay here, is gone to drive away dulness, and make love at Warsaw. I fear, unless Paris, making a generous effort, should send some one to polish us, we shall incessantly grow rusty. The frozen shores of the Baltic render the mind as frigid as the body; and we should be so many icicles, were not some Gallic Prometheus occasionally to bring fire from Heaven, to reanimate us. I know one who might do us this service, yet will

do no such thing; for it is said he is the perpetual secretary to an academy, and has lately been appointed intendant of the lakes and rivers. Should you meet such a person, give my compliments to him, and assure him that no man is more interested in his welfare than the ancho-rite of Sans Souci. *Vale.*

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R CXXVII.

From M. D' Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, April 12, 1775,

I DID not till this day, April 12, receive the letter your majesty did me the honour to write, dated March 16th, in which you have been pleased to inform me of the porcelain bust, which you have had the goodness to send, after having previously bestowed the richest presents of the same kind; and especially after having bestowed your own portrait, which left me nothing to wish, and which I have had set in a manner almost unbecoming a philosopher, that I might always wear it without fear that it should be injured.

Your majesty has done me the honour to in-
form

form me that the bust you have been pleased to give me is of *one of the most celebrated men in Europe*. I ardently wish it were the bust of your majesty; but you would not speak thus of yourself; nor does Europe wish you so to speak; for the qualifying praise of one of the most celebrated when applied to the greatest and most illustrious prince of the age, whom the few famous men now existing regard as their example and their chief, would be very modest. If it be the bust of Voltaire, as I suppose it to be, I shall write beneath it—*The portrait of a great man, given by a man more great*. In fine, I wait with much impatience for this new proof of your majesty's bounty; nor shall I fail, when I receive it, again to testify my ardent and respectful gratitude, the expression of which I was unwilling to delay. Let me entreat your majesty to accept this gratitude with your usual goodness, and especially to believe that words are very incapable of conveying the sentiments of my heart.

The comte de Czernicheff, whom your majesty did me the honour to mention in your last letter, and with whom I have often conversed of the glory, the supreme talents, and the virtues of your majesty, and particularly of my own admiration and devotedness, will no doubt have done these feelings justice, since he has been

kind enough to speak of me to your majesty, for whom he, like all Europe, appeared to entertain the highest veneration.

I do not think we shall see Voltaire at Paris. I doubt whether his health will permit him to undertake the journey; and still more whether the court be in any haste to enjoy his company. He will find us what he five and twenty years ago left us, doing and uttering much folly; one of the most serious acts of which, because its consequences have been execrable, is the affair of the unfortunate d'Etallonde, concerning which many worthy people continue busied. But we have to contend with a body of men, which (as a body) is still very absurd and barbarous. Justice and reason must wrestle with superstition, atrocity, and pride united; and the contest is unequal.

The sieur Tassart, whom I occasionally see, never fails to testify how enraptured he is to enter the service of the great man, who is the most enlightened judge of talents. He is so eager to perform his duty that he will greatly hasten his departure. He thinks to set off in a month, and to arrive at the beginning of June; that is to say, about six weeks sooner than he imagined he should arrive. I once more take the liberty to recommend the affair of lodging him

him to your majesty, which will complete his happiness, and if possible increase his ardour and zeal, for the service of your majesty.

I am little interested, sire, in behalf of my countrymen who travel to shine, and who generally render the nation ridiculous. It is sufficiently so at home, and need not export its folly and frivolity.

I am much affected by the interest which your majesty has been pleased to betoken for M. de Catt, who appears to be most grateful for your bounty. This is the subject of all his letters, and I venture to say he deserves your kindness, by being wholly devoted to your majesty, and by his inviolable fidelity. Such are the sentiments which every virtuous man, who approaches your majesty, ought to feel. Those who are not virtuous may think otherwise, but their complaints will be your praise. Yet am I bold enough to claim your kindness, in behalf of an unfortunate man, who affirms detraction has injured him with your majesty. I speak of the sieur E * * *, who conjures your majesty to listen to the proofs which he is desirous to present of his innocence. I occasionally saw him, during his stay at Paris. His conduct appeared to me prudent and good ; nor have I heard any thing of him which could inspire unfavourable ideas.

ideas. All he requests of your majesty is the permission of self-justification. A thousand times do I ask pardon for the freedom I have taken, to present the request of the unfortunate; of whom I had not dared to speak, had I thought him culpable.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXXVIII.

From the King.

May 8, 1775.

YOU have well divined: the bust which I have sent is that of Voltaire. Its merit consists in its resemblance; it is Voltaire himself, and wants nothing but speech. You will answer that is the greatest want it could have: but sculpture and porcelain have not this gift. And, that perfection may be obtained, you must look on the bust, and read the *Henriade*. Were you here, our artists would not be idle; and I am certain your bust would soon stand by the side of that of Voltaire. But we have dukes, and the most ancient barons of France, for visitors; while those whom we should highly prefer will not condescend

condescend to bear their torch hither, that our horizon may be enlightened.

I suspect you understand the eulogiums I have written on these lords, who have not disdained to visit our rustic abodes, to be ironical. They are modern Columbuses, who have traversed Hercynian forests, to examine the savages who inhabit the shores of the Baltic. They were astonished to see us walk on our two hind feet ; but we have candidly confessed we are indebted for this to the zeal of Louis XIV, who sent us a colony of Huguenots, from whom we have derived as many benefits as have been bestowed by the sons of Ignatius on the Iroquois. Still however are we in a rude state ; we are ignorant of a multitude of new fangled phrases, with which the fertile and elegant fancies of your men of fashion have enriched the French tongue. We wish to learn the language of the toilette, and to be able to harangue on trinkets, and plumes of feathers ; to keep up an interesting conversation on the best manner of placing patches, and laying on rouge, and a hundred things of the like gravity, to which our stupidity cannot bend. We are so humbled, when we hear them declaim on court-days, and levees, private audiences, and the honour of bidding his majesty good morning, that we sink into absolute non-entity

entity in the presence of these men of the first fashion, who give us descriptions so awful. We cannot, like the Grecian philosopher, thank the gods for having created us man, rather than beast; for having been born in Athens, rather than in Bœotia; and in an enlightened rather than in an ignorant age. We are not so much even as Bœotians; nay, we are worse than guide-posts, set up in a crossway, in the north of Germany, on the banks of the Baltic. Ovid, banished into Pontus, never shivered so much in those abodes, where the Danube with its seven mouths falls into the Euxine, as we do annually here. Imagine then what must be the impression, on the inhabitants of a country so ill treated by Nature, at the arrival of modern Athenians, sparkling with grace, wit, and gentility. Let this at least be my apology; and no longer let the citizen of a nation celebrated among the ancient Romans themselves, for its candour and good faith, be suspected of malignity.

Your recommendation will certainly not be useless to the sieur Taffart. I have no house at my own disposal, and have no other resource than that of building a new one. Taffart too will describe the coronation at Rheims; the hostages for the holy phial; the procession and the triumphal cars, worth six hundred thousand livres; at
which

which we shall be in ecstasies, admiring miracles such as we could not even so much as imagine. This holy phial, which a dove brought from heaven to anoint a king of France, and which is never empty, will occasion our good people, hearing of it, to exclaim—"Alas! when our Provençal oil is all gone, we are obliged to buy more!" But there is only one most christian king in the world, and we are far from being this king.

You Parisians, who live in one continued round of opulence and grandeur, treat those things as common, which to us seem extraordinary; nor can you conceive the impression which, at this distance, they make on the simplicity of our manners. But here I stop, lest I should give offence to Infidels. Suspect me of all you please, yet at least do justice to the interest which I personally take in you, the admiration in which I hold your talents, and the prayers I put up for your welfare.

On which, &c.

L E T T E R CXXIX.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, May 17, 1775

I HAVE received the new present with which your majesty has been pleased to honour me, and do not lose a moment to testify my lively gratitude. The bust of M. de Voltaire is of greater worth, by being received from your august and cherished hand, than even by being that of an old and illustrious friend, whose image it so well recalls to mind. The resemblance is perfect, and the workmanship is equal to the highest expectation. The inscription, *Immortalis*, from its truth, simplicity, and dignity, is worthy of the great man to whom it is consecrated; and of the still greater man by whom it has been imagined. Three words only are wanting which, with your majesty's permission, I shall take the liberty to add; signifying that this immortal man has been given me, by another immortal man. *Immortalis—ab immortalibus datus.*

May this immortal man, to his other so well merited titles to renown, add that of being the pacificator of the North, and of Europe! May he, by his ascendancy and influence, drive far
off

off that war with which the bulls threaten us frogs! The poor Gauls in particular, fire, Gauls though they be, have no need of new misfortunes. Your majesty is no doubt informed of the troubles, excited in different parts of the kingdom, by the dearnefs of bread; which has only been made a pretext, for bread was much dearer under the preceding ministry, yet no person complained. But the knaves who, protected by this ministry, traded in corn, to the prejudice of the people, cannot endure a minister who will not allow them to cheat; and they have been prodigal of gold, of perfidious manœuvres, and infamy of every kind, to overthrow, if they can, the most worthy and most virtuous man who ever was at the head of the finances. Fortunately our young king, who loves virtue, and on whom knaves cannot impose, knows the source of these troubles, and has restored order with a degree of calm fortitude which cannot be mentioned, by good citizens, but in terms of gratitude, and affection.

What may appear strange, yet will not so appear to your majesty, who is well acquainted with mankind, and especially with priests, is that not one of the bishops, who are continually seen at Versailles, and whose dioceses have suffered by these troubles, have addressed the people

ple that they might be appeased. The archbishop of Paris gave an example of this edifying silence; though his pastoral letters are issued on the most trifling occasions. Would your majesty believe it! The king himself has been obliged to do the duty of this gentleman, and to send instructions to the parish priests, to inform them how they were to act; such instructions as should have been sent by the bishops. True it is, these instructions are a master-piece of wisdom and goodness; which, it is very certain, neither the archbishop of Paris, the grand almoner, the first almoner, nor all the almoners at court were capable of writing. All these grand and first zealots, who so loudly declaim at court against philosophers, because philosophers know and have pronounced sentence on them, had before, by their folly and impudence, unmasked themselves, during the illness of the late king, whom they would have suffered to expire without the sacraments! This adventure completely displayed the men. It is for the promotion of reason and virtue that they should persecute.

This prolixity can but little interest your majesty. I am better pleased to speak of the sieur Taffart, who is eager to repair to his duty, and who has hastened his departure nearly a month, that he may enter the service of your majesty,

to

to whom to dedicate his life and labours appears to be his highest happiness. I am convinced your majesty will be better satisfied with the industry, the worth, and prudence, of this good Fleming, than with our turbulent French artists. He recommends himself to your majesty's bounty relative to the house, hopes of which you have been pleased to give, in the letter you have done me the honour to write. This will crown his happiness, and complete that gratitude with which he seems penetrated, in return for your majesty's kindness.

After having so long detained your majesty with our atrocious follies, I will not mention those which are only ridiculous; our bad poetry, vile books, and the height of our caps. I would rather speak to you of the rise of the public funds, which, since the entrance of our new comptroller-general into office, has been incredible. Nor have the present troubles occasioned any alteration; for the probity of the minister, and the virtues of the king, have acquired the full confidence of the people.

I am, with all the sentiments of respect, gratitude, and admiration, which will never end but with life, &c.

L E T T E R CXXX.

From the King.

June 19, 1775.

A SHORT journey, equal to three hundred French leagues, has prevented me from answering you sooner, my dear Anaxagoras. I am glad you are pleased with the bust. Each, to the best of his ability, wishes to spread and perpetuate the fame of Voltaire; but brittle porcelain is not sufficiently durable, for the man it represents. Our artists, however, zealous for the merit of the original, have laboured with all their powers to immortalize him; and I was very well pleased to find due tribute had been paid to superior talents, at Berlin.

You suppose me to be in the clouds, occupied in governing Europe, but you are greatly mistaken. I live retired, like the most pacific of men. Tranquillity reigns in the east. The north respires, after having sustained a cruel war; and the Gauls, as far as I am informed, have no troubles to fear.

I have admired the conduct of your young monarch, who has not been shaken by those seditions which the cabals of bad subjects have
excited,

excited, nor has ceded to the pernicious designs of some malecontents. This fortitude will confirm his future administration. People eager after change have made the experiment ; he has resisted, and supported his ministers, and they will no more hazard similar attempts. The conduct of your bishops and priests incites no astonishment in me. What good can be expected, from such a race ? They have but two gods ; interest, and pride. It is proper that your young king should be taught, by his own experience, what those prejudices are in which he has been educated, by sacred empirics. How happy are the Pennsylvanians, who live wholly without them !

I have seen a M. de Laval Montmorency, and a M. Clermont Gallerande here, who seem to me to be amiable and modest young men, and without foppery. They have been with me into that country which I call our Canada ; I mean Pomerelia, of which, I imagine, at their return, they will give a fine description, to the Parisians. Taylors and shoemakers are artists in great repute, in this country. I am at present appointing a hundred and eighty schools, protestant and catholic ; and I regard myself as the Lycurgus, or Solon, of these barbarians. Imagine what they were, when I tell you, the

right of property was unknown, in this wretched land ! The strong, with impunity, oppressed the weak. But this is ended, and order will hereafter be introduced. The Austrians and Russians find like confusion, in their districts ; nor can these Iroquois be civilised, but by length of time and education.

Taffart is arrived, and I will do every thing in my power to satisfy him ; particularly in consequence of your recommendation.

Now that my journeys are partly over, I shall return, with increase of appetite, to letters ; the only aliment of the understanding, and the sole amusement worthy of beings who lay claim to reason, of which in reality it seems to me that we have very little. Adieu, my dear Anaxagoras ! You will do a very meritorious work, should you some time determine to come and visit the hermit of Sans Souci. However I do not press you. You live in a country in which so many things are to be considered, and reconsidered, that the perpetual secretary of the academy cannot do all he wishes.

On which I pray, &c.

L E T T E R CXXXI.

From M. D'Alembert.

S I R E,

Paris, July 10, 1775.

NOT long since I was greatly alarmed for the health of your majesty. I immediately hastened to baron von Goltz, who removed my fears by the letters he had recently received; and, by the last letter which your majesty has had the kindness to write, they have been wholly dissipated. This has proved, not only that your majesty enjoys perfect health, but, that cheerfulness, which is the general attendant on health, is yours. This, sire, may you long enjoy, as well for your own glory as for the good of philosophy, to which you are so necessary!

The praises you bestow, on the conduct of our young monarch, are well founded. He wishes to do good, and for this end he leaves nothing unattempted. The choice of his servants is the best possible. He has lately appointed a successor to the duke de la Vrillière, who at length goes out of office, to the general satisfaction. His successor is M. de Maleherbes, the man who, perhaps, with the most justice, is the most respected of any man in the nation,

and who will concur with M. Turgot, everywhere to introduce order, and œconomy, which so long have been banished. Great is the alarm, in knaves-camp ! They will meet with no quarter from these men. The whole nation is enchanted, and offers up prayers for the health and prosperity of the king !

I speak of these two virtuous ministers with the more undisguise, because I neither hope nor will accept any thing from them. The comptroller-general, to whom I offered my services, on condition they should be gratuitous, told me, a few days ago, he should be glad to do something for me—"Beware of that !" was my reply. "I have no need of any thing ; and it is " my wish that my attachment to you should " not be liable to suspicion."—In fine, fire, the people all exclaim in chorus—" *The day more bright appears*"—and hope their prayers will be heard.

The priests alone stand aloof, and silently murmur, without daring to be too loud. But the king knows priests to be what they are, from the care which they have *not* taken of his education. He has lately bestowed a blue riband, upon the only honest man among his tutors ; and he will no doubt do justice to the others,

by being deaf to their advice, should they think proper to advise.

It is said an account of the ceremonies of the coronation has been sent to your majesty, and you no doubt will have felt your indignation rise at the affectation, and I may add the impudence, with which the priests have made the king take oaths to them, and them only. It is affirmed they acted better still, on this occasion; and that they suppressed that part of the ceremony at which two assistant bishops should have asked the people, whether they acknowledged Louis XVI. for their king. These good citizens would, had they the power, break those sacred ties which unite the king and the subject—obedience inspired by love. I am very angry with the author of the *Système de la Nature*, concerning the pretended compact which he imagines kings and priests have entered into, that they may oppress the people. Had this dangerous writer only opened an ecclesiastical history, he would have seen that, in all times, and on all occasions, priests have been the greatest enemies of kings. May all sovereigns hereafter think of this race like you, sire! A race that, as you so well have said, are only acquainted with two gods, interest and pride.

I am very certain Pomerelia will feel the effects
of

of your majesty's government; that the reign of knowledge and justice will begin; and that you will contribute to the happiness, and information, of these Esquimaux Indians.

I once more take the liberty to recommend the sieur Taffart to your majesty's kindness; of which, by his labours and behaviour, I hope he will be found worthy.

It is to me a pleasing spectacle to see your majesty, in the midst of so many occupations, find time notwithstanding to bestow on letters. They will derive advantage, as well from your works as from the protection you afford; and a medal might be struck, with Frederic on one side and Minerva on the other, the legend of which should be *Ditat et Defendit*. What you enrich you defend. For my own part, I can be little more than a spectator of the success of philosophy. My health will not allow me to labour much; it begins however to strengthen; and I wish it might so far be confirmed as to permit me to travel, and present that just homage, profound respect, admiration, and lively gratitude, which I am indebted to you, for all your bounty.

With these sentiments I shall all my life remain, &c.

L E T.

LETTER CXXXII.

From the King.

August 5, 1775.

YOU have been needlessly alarmed, my dear Anaxagoras! I had only some attacks of fever and cold, of which my journey into Prussia has entirely cured me. Believe me there can be no health without exercise. A journey is a more efficacious remedy than ipecacuanha, or the bark. Should you come to Prussia, you will recover your strength. An old man, tolerably cheerful for his age, will communicate his good humour to you, and you will return to Paris ten years younger. An English lord *, with a hard name and an amiable mind, has brought me a letter from you. My first questions were—"How is the prince of philosophers? Is he merry? Does he work? Have you often been in his company?"—"I! Oh no, sir; I come from London."—"Why D'Alembert is at Paris?"—"Yes, but he sent me a letter for me to deliver to you."—Thus, from explanation to explanation, I learned, at last, he had formerly been at Paris, where he became acquainted with you, and that the first thing that

* Dalrymple. T.

struck him was that, in order to be well received here, he must obtain a passport from Anaxagoras. He was not deceived; and I own he is one of the most amiable Englishmen I have met. I except nothing but his name, which I shall never remember. He ought to be rebaptised, and to be christened Stair, which would be just as well.

Thanks to levity, we are no more told of the celestial pigeon, the holy vial, the coronation, nor of all those wretched things which call to mind the ages of ignorance and barbarism. I hear much good of your new king, and am charmed to hear it; still with the proviso that he persevere, and that he do not cede to the arts of courtiers, and those successive assaults which are made on kings, that they may become the partakers of guilt and folly. Much is said of his excellent choice of ministers; but I am neither a monkey, that mimics, nor a parrot, that repeats: I wait awhile, that I may judge of men by their actions. I am neither acquainted with Turgot nor Maleherbes, though very well with one Malefieux, a man of information and amiable manners, who passed his life with madame du Maine, at Seaux. Your financiers and lawyers are known only to those to whom they give bills payable on sight, and to such

such as gain their causes by the exertion of their talents. Their fame does not cross the Rhine, unless in some well written brief on a celebrated cause. Foreigners love those who afford pleasure, and not the dull. The author of a good tragedy will be more generally known than the first president of a court of inquests, or the chancellor himself. Not to mention that these ministers pass away: the pedestal on which they stand is so unstable that the least shock tumbles them down, and we regret having been of their acquaintance. I, who am only sixty-three, have seen above eighty ministers in France. These sports of favour, or intrigue, seldom interest us, unless some superior man happen to arise. I keep to Voltaire, and to Anaxagoras, who are in no need of exterior decoration. They decorate themselves. I prefer them to such men as La Vrillière, Amelot, La Verdie, Terrai, Rouillé, and all their tribe. Not that an able and honest minister is not estimable; but he ought to be satisfied with the approbation of that people to whom he does good. Men of letters instruct and afford pleasure and amusement to all Europe; it is but therefore just that they should receive the applause of all Europe.

I leave your bishops to play their tricks at their own good pleasure. They are moulds in
which

which to cast folly ; nor can any thing better be expected from them : I abandon them to the anathemas of the Encyclopedists, and devote them and their whole race to the infernal gods, if such there be. But not so my good Jesuits. They are my pet lambs ; not as monks, but as tutors for youth, and men of letters, to preserve whom is useful to society.

I have seen Le Kain act, and have admired his playing. Were he less violent he would be the Roscius of his age. I delight to see the passions represented naturally, as they are. The heart is then affected ; but I immediately become cold when art hides and stifles nature. You will exclaim—" These are your Germans, " with their icy passions ! They take offence at " strength of expression, which they are incapable of feeling !" It may be so. I will not venture to write a panegyric on my countrymen. True it is, they neither pull down mills nor spoil the seed wheat, while complaining of the dearth of corn. They have hitherto neither had any massacre of St. Bartholomew nor wars of the Fronde. But, as the world progressively grows wiser, our wits hope all this may in good time come to pass ; especially if the Gauls would but honour us with a little mental friction. Mentioning the Gauls, I always except men
like

like Voltaire and D'Alembert, whom I shall admire till the very moment when Nature shall return me to the clay of which she formed me first.

On which I pray, &c.

END OF VOLUME XI.

THE JOURNAL OF THE

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

FOR THE YEAR 1914

CHICAGO, ILL., 1914

Published by the American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Subscription price, \$5.00 per annum in advance.

Single copies, 15 cents.

Entered as second-class matter, June 26, 1907, at Chicago, Ill., under post office number 383,000.

Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Act of October 3, 1917, authorized on July 1, 1918.

Postage paid at Chicago, Ill., and at additional mailing offices.

Copyright, 1914, by American Medical Association.

Printed by the American Medical Association, Chicago, Ill.

Published weekly, except during the months of January and February, when it is published bi-weekly.

Volume 19, Number 1, January 1, 1914.

Subscription orders, notices of change of address, and other communications should be sent to the Editor, American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Advertisements should be sent to the Business Manager, American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Entered by mail as second-class matter, June 26, 1907, at Chicago, Ill., under post office number 383,000.

Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Act of October 3, 1917, authorized on July 1, 1918.

Postage paid at Chicago, Ill., and at additional mailing offices.

Copyright, 1914, by American Medical Association.

Printed by the American Medical Association, Chicago, Ill.

Published weekly, except during the months of January and February, when it is published bi-weekly.

Volume 19, Number 1, January 1, 1914.

Subscription orders, notices of change of address, and other communications should be sent to the Editor, American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Advertisements should be sent to the Business Manager, American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

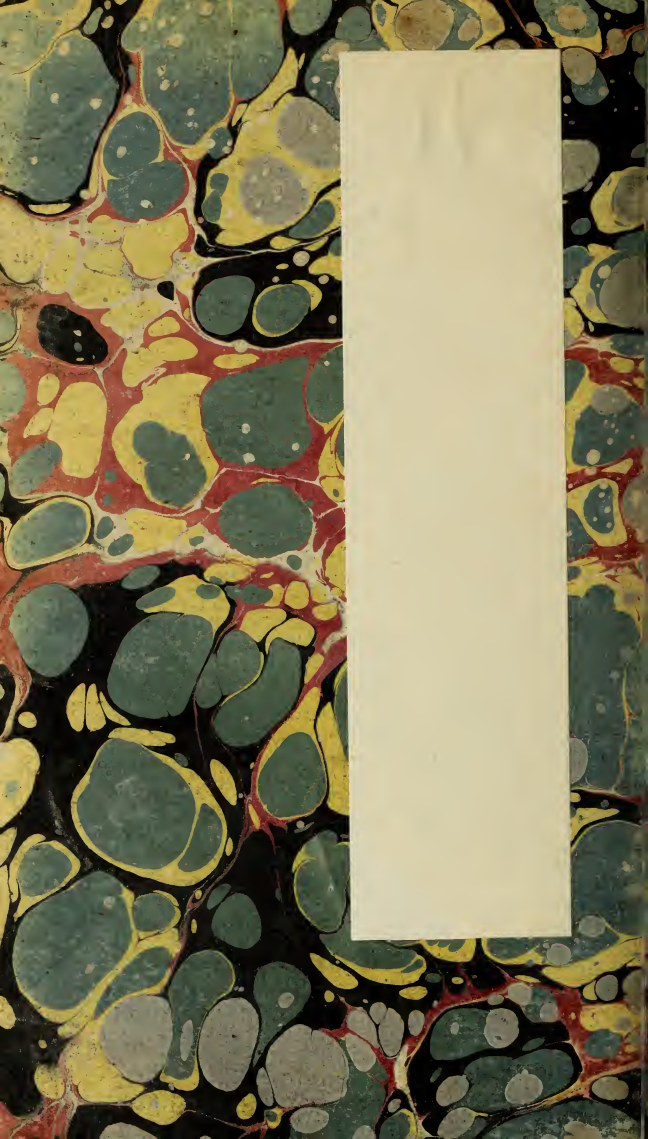
Entered by mail as second-class matter, June 26, 1907, at Chicago, Ill., under post office number 383,000.

Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Act of October 3, 1917, authorized on July 1, 1918.

Postage paid at Chicago, Ill., and at additional mailing offices.







TUFTS UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



3 9090 003 834 989

